

American Warships and Chinese Money—by Ma Soo

# The Nation

Vol. CXVIII, No. 3053

FOUNDED 1865

Wednesday, Jan. 9, 1924

## William Hard's Prize Contest

*What Should a New Party Stand For?*

Judges: Senator Robert La Follette—*Progressive*  
Senator Reed Smoot—*Conservative*

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His Majesty's  
Labor Government

*The Revolution in England*

France Dips  
into Polish Oil

*A European Menace*

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## What Mr. Hughes Needs to Know About Russia

*"Revolutions Cannot Be Transported in Suit Cases"*—Karl Radek

by Louis Fischer

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## Man and Mystery in Asia

is the title of the new volume ready this month by **FERDINAND OSSENDOWSKI**,  
Author of "Beasts, Men and Gods"

which was the sensation of the year in the book world. Men of the most widely different types—clergymen, sailors, professors, explorers, missionaries, engineers—especially engineers—pronounced it "the most terrible and fascinating book we have ever read; one that should be read by everyone. It is more thrilling than the wildest novel of adventure."

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**S**AMUEL GOMPERS has written a superb chapter into our history. His condemnation of the De la Huerta treason in Mexico gives American labor a new international standing. President William Johnston of the International Association of Machinists and Governor Hunt of Arizona, whose proclamation appears in this issue, have vigorously seconded him. But Gompers went beyond mere verbal indorsement of the Obregon-Calles regime. It is largely through his vigorous appeals to the State Department and to organized labor in the Gulf ports and along the border that arms-smuggling to the counter-revolutionists is being made so difficult. Meanwhile the wholly reactionary character of the rebellion grows increasingly plain. Its three leading generals, Sanchez, Estrada, and Maycotte, have issued a manifesto calling for a military dictatorship and the postponement of constitutional government until 1928—if they win. In Merida, Yucatan's capital, the first acts of the revolting commander were to burn the building of the Liga Central de Resistencia and to proclaim the immediate restoration of the distributed lands to the former owners. Yet the Chicago *Tribune* is already shouting for intervention and in a leading editorial entitled Mexico: Platt II, demands a Platt Amendment for Mexico reducing her to the status of Nicaragua, Haiti, and Cuba. The right policy for our Government is: Hands off! Deeply as we sympathize with President Obregon, Washington's decision to give, lend, or sell him arms as a measure of "stabilization" establishes a thoroughly dangerous precedent. It is not our

function, in Mexico, Honduras, or anywhere except in the United States, to determine which faction is stable and which is unstable.

**A**RE there any progressive or liberal or radical policies abroad in the land? Are there any conservative ones? Has any program appeared, to lead the unhappy voter out of the political wilderness? How is the average citizen to know what is progressive and hopeful and what is reactionary and discouraging when almost every national policy has its liberal supporters and its conservative supporters and is claimed by each as one of the tenets of his liberalism or his conservatism? William Hard raises these questions in his Washington letter in this issue of *The Nation*, seeking a way out into the light of a real and cohesive program which might form the basis of a new party of intelligent change. *The Nation* urges its readers to respond to Mr. Hard's invitation with every ounce of political and social sagacity they can command. We may be able to get on without the proffered lock of Senator Shipstead's hair, but we cannot get on much longer without a new party. The soul and body of such a party will spring from the conditions of life in America today; but its mental content, the formulation of the ideas it stands for, must come from smaller groups of alert and thoughtful citizens. Of such are the readers of *The Nation*. The results of Mr. Hard's contest will appear from time to time in our pages.

**L**ESS than half as many men were lynched in this land of freedom in 1923 as in 1922. Tuskegee Institute reports that 46 lynchings were prevented last year by officers of the law. This is an encouraging record. James Weldon Johnson of the National Association for the Advancement of the Colored People attributes the change to the northward migration of hundreds of thousands of Negroes and to the fear of federal intervention inspired in the South by the Dyer Anti-Lynching Bill. Doubtless the growing desire for better inter-racial relations in the South has its roots in these movements, but there is still work to be done. Even twenty-six violent deaths suffered for such crimes as "mistaken identity, aiding in escape, associating with white women, being in an automobile accident, remaining in a town where Negroes were not wanted, and frightening white children by walking on a country road" make an irreparable blot upon any country. And every year in the smaller villages of the South some of these heinous things go unrecorded. In this year of Klan activity fear probably kept many such crimes hidden. Mr. Dyer's job is not done yet.

**W**HEN the naval inquiry into the loss of the destroyer squadron wrecked near Point Honda began, *The Nation* was convinced that those responsible would practically escape punishment. That has come to pass. The commander of the squadron, Captain E. H. Watson, will lose one hundred and fifty numbers in the grade of captain as the result of his court martial, and Lieutenant Commander Donald T. Hunter will lose one hundred places on



the lineal list. This is considered a fitting punishment for an accident in which twenty-three sailors were drowned and seven ships were totally wrecked. It is a disgrace to the service that only two officers were punished and these so inadequately. But navy court martials rarely do their duty when it comes to punishing commissioned officers. The ordinary seaman who offends gets short shrift; he is not within the charmed circle. A commander may cast away his ship, but the service's "loyalty" will save him nine times out of ten.

**P**RESIDENT COOLIDGE'S release of the last of our federal political prisoners should be, as we pointed out at the time, not the end of public interest in the subject, but the beginning of a united national agitation for freeing the other political prisoners who are still in jail because of conviction under State laws. They, like the federal prisoners, were convicted not for any acts but for expression of opinion or membership in radical organizations. They were prosecuted under the criminal-syndicalism or anti-sedition laws which more than three-quarters of our States passed during the period of "Red" hysteria and violent alien-baiting that followed the armistice. These laws were largely stimulated by the infamous Palmer and his prostitution of the Department of Justice. They all violate the spirit of free speech and have not even the excuse of "war emergency" to justify them. The Civil Liberties Union lists 114 men as strictly political prisoners serving sentences for their beliefs in the States of California, Washington, Idaho, Pennsylvania, Oklahoma, Kansas, and Illinois. Agitation within these States has not proved effective in ending this meanest and most cowardly species of persecution and injustice; the pressure of outside condemnation and scorn is needed.

**I**N connection with the political prisoners still held under State laws, our attention has been called to the fate of five Mexicans and one American who have been in jail in Texas more than ten years. From the statements of their attorney it appears that the leader of the group, Jesus M. Rangel, had for some years previous to 1912 been a Mexican revolutionary with his headquarters in Texas, which he used as a base for organizing armed bands and conducting them across the border. In one of these expeditions Rangel and a party among whom was an American, Charles Cline, were halted by a deputy sheriff and an assistant who is alleged to have been a Mexican spy. Subsequently, the latter was found dead from bullet wounds. Rangel and his men were pursued, and those who were captured were tried, convicted of conspiracy in the murder, and sentenced to life imprisonment. The evidence that any of these men was responsible for the killing seems to have been hazy, and the fact that they were revolutionaries and "greasers" undoubtedly worked against them. Their only certain crime was violation of the neutrality laws, which would have been punishable with one year in jail. President Obregon and other Mexicans are asking for the release of these men. Whatever the facts, the prisoners have been punished enough. We hope Governor Neff will pardon them.

**"BALANCING"** the French budget is more a matter of intellectual acrobatics than of public accounting. "French Budget Shows a Surplus," say the headlines in

the newspapers; "Estimates for 1924 Put Balance on Right Side of Ledger at 568,000,000 Francs." This seems, indeed, extraordinary news in days when France, although unwilling to pay interest to England or the United States, is lending hundreds of millions of francs to the little countries of Central Europe for their expanding military establishments. Scott Nearing tells how the French politicians divide their budget into two sections: the "ordinary" and the "extraordinary." The ordinary budget balances; no attempt is made to balance the extraordinary budget. It consists of expenses which Paris thinks Germany ought to pay—of pension allowances and the costs of reconstruction (which, according to some French deputies, have been grossly swollen by scandalous intermediary profits). No, there is no real prospect of a balanced budget in France. The public debt on January 1, 1924, stood twenty billion francs higher than a year before; and the Ministry of Finance is proposing another loan issue of thirteen billions. No wonder the franc has just touched its lowest mark in the foreign exchange market.

**L**ÉON DAUDET, son of the novelist, and leader of the French royalists, played a strange part in the death of his own son and in the acquittal of Germaine Berton, the "Red virgin" who had killed Marius Plateau, Daudet's subordinate in his newspaper office. There is something pathological in this vile-tongued man who has been on all sides of the political fence; his political enemies once compiled a "Directory of Defamation" in which they quoted his abuse, at one time or another, of every politician or statesman of importance in France. Pressure from his own Catholic church recently forced him to withdraw from sale one of his pornographic novels. Yet this man has power. He has forced many a man from public office; and although it was his paper which led poor Villain to assassinate Jean Jaurès in 1914, Daudet's influence obtained an acquittal for the boy when he came to trial. That fact undoubtedly played a heavy role in the acquittal of Germaine Berton. To have convicted her, after Villain had been acquitted, would have been to give effective ammunition to the orators of the Left. Daudet is in a real sense responsible for the unpunished death of his friend Marius Plateau. But his indecency is greater than that. Recently, when his own son turned anarchist and then, possibly in an epileptic fit, shot himself, the father first concealed the fact. Then, when it was revealed, he charged the anarchists with murder and actually had his own son disinterred before the falsity of his charge was proved.

**I**F anybody had predicted a couple of years ago that the day would come when an American citizen could not bring his wife into the United States, he would have been laughed out of countenance. He would have been told that Americans could never so lose their sense of humor—even if they did lose their sense of justice—as to perpetrate such incredible nonsense. Yet, as we pointed out recently, such incredible nonsense is not only on our statute books through the joint operation of the immigration law and the new citizenship act, but it has been specifically invoked to bar from this country Anna Lerner, the wife of an American veteran of the World War. Since we wrote on this subject, Senator Copeland has introduced a bill providing for the mandatory admission of wives of American citizens "without reference to quota or to any other provision of the im-



migration or naturalization laws." Immediate passage of this bill is the least we can do to save ourselves from becoming the butt of the whole world's ridicule; and we should add a provision making it equally possible for an American woman to bring in her alien husband.

"YES or no? Do you like our plan or not? We are offering peace in only one style this year. Those who prefer war will vote no." The Bok peace-prize committee might as well have made the announcement of its gigantic referendum in these terms. The committee's statement, given out after *The Nation* had gone to press last week, confirms the apprehensions described in our editorial, Bok—Peace or Propaganda? Whether the plan is for or against the League, whether we like it or not, the method of balloting makes popular indorsement both inevitable and meaningless. The committee unconsciously admitted this when it announced, according to the *New York World's* report, that "the remaining \$50,000 will be paid when the plan has met the approval of a majority in the nation-wide test." "Do you approve the winning plan in substance," says the ballot; and the small-type note "If you wish to express a fuller opinion also, please write to the American Peace Award" will pass unnoticed by most. A fair referendum would have included alternative plans.

THE tragic loss of the *Dixmude* brings out anew the weakness of dirigibles. In the air such craft are relatively safe; they seem able to ride through the worst storms. It is when it comes to landing that the difficulty arises; all the passenger Zeppelins lost in Germany before the war were destroyed in descending to earth. If, as is presumed, the *Dixmude* suddenly developed engine trouble and could not return to her landing-place, her commander was faced with a practically insoluble problem. In the lightest of summer zephyrs one of these mammoth airships floats over the land with a momentum taxing the power of 150 to 200 men to hold her. The *Dixmude's* commander would have had difficulty in bringing her to earth at any point, but without a landing crew to aid him he could only hope with luck to save his men while losing his ship. The mooring masts which have been successfully used by our own great *Shenandoah* may eventually be developed into stations of refuge at frequent intervals. But this question how landings may be made in all weather without requiring the constant presence of a large gang is causing more worry to the engineers who are planning the New York-Chicago line of night flyers than all the rest of their difficulties. It is an appreciation of this unsolved element in the airship problem which makes us doubt the wisdom of using the *Shenandoah* for polar exploration next summer.

EDWARD P. FARLEY'S resignation as chairman of the Shipping Board is a genuine loss to the government. The Senate was technically right in rejecting Mr. Farley's nomination because he hailed from a section of the country already represented on the board—the law specifies that only one person from a district may be appointed to the board. But as the law appears to have been similarly violated in Mr. Lasker's case with the Senate's consent and approval, one must regret that the Senate's sudden spasm of virtue deprives the government of the best chairman the board has yet had. Whereas Mr. Lasker was an advertising

agent, Mr. Farley was a real steamship man. Himself an owner and operator of steamships, he knows by practical experience the problems to be faced, and he has brought enthusiasm, common sense, and a clear-cut judgment to their study and solution, in addition to a winning personality. It is so rare that a combination like this is to be found in a man able and ready to take public office that Mr. Farley's retirement is a public misfortune.

ARTHUR GLEASON'S sudden death comes at a singularly inappropriate time. He had been the ablest interpreter of the British labor movement to this country, and he dies just as it seems about to assume power. When, during the war and after, in his "Inside the British Isles," in "British Labor and the War" (in which Paul U. Kellogg collaborated), and in "What the Workers Want," he traced the germination of the democratic industrial movement which is flowering in the British Labor Party and predicted for it the success which now seems so certain, most Americans put him down as a rosy-visioned dreamer. Gleason was always thinking in the future tense; when he was an associate editor of *The Nation* his colleagues learned to respect his stubborn contempt for conventional news standards. Perhaps his greatest contribution to American thinking was in connection with the movement for nationalization among the coal miners. As in England he became the intimate friend of Robert Smillie, the British miners' leader, so here he was very close to John Brophy, long chairman of the Nationalization Committee of the United Mine Workers of America, and profoundly influenced Mr. Brophy's thinking. He was never a propagandist; he was always puzzling things out himself and questioning others, forcing them to think. His loss is a loss to the undercurrent of thinking in America which molds the future far more than the noisy political campaigns.

THE *American Mercury* has at last got itself born. Beautiful in form, stimulating in the variety of its matter, it is frankly iconoclastic, avowedly concerned with "proving to all men that doubt, after all, is safe." Its credo is consciously, carefully different from that of any of its rivals and predecessors:

[The magazine is to be] entirely devoid of messianic passion. The editors have heard no voice from the burning bush. . . . The world, as they see it, is down with at least a score of painful diseases, all of them chronic and incurable; nevertheless, they cling to the notion that human existence remains predominantly charming.

Its own pet hallucination will take the form of an hypothesis that the progress of knowledge is less a matter of accumulating facts than a matter of destroying "facts."

Neither [editor] is a radical. . . . Both view the capitalistic system, if not exactly amorously, then, at all events, politely. . . . They believe that it is destined to endure in the United States, . . . if only because the illusion that any bright boy can make himself a part of it remains a cardinal article of the American national religion. . . ."

Mr. Mencken and Mr. Nathan have taught their readers to expect of them a certain tempo which they do not always achieve in this new venture. The *Clinical Notes* suffer by comparison with the *Répétition Générale* of the old *Smart Set*. There are surprising sobernesses here and there. But these after all are minor points when "Castor and Pollux are out again."

## His Majesty's Labor Government

OF profound import to all the world will be the assumption of the British Government by a Labor minority if, as now appears probable, that takes place soon after Parliament meets. The reasons lie far deeper than the mere fact that this new party to come into power bears the tag of labor. It is not, of course, simply a party of hard-fisted laborers. Its astounding rise to power is perhaps as much due to the leadership of intellectuals like Sidney and Beatrice Webb and the Fabian Society group as to the class-consciousness of the workingmen. There is here, as we have frequently pointed out, a most fortunate blending of intellectual leadership and of labor aspirations, both united in a common determination to take the control of British life out of the hands of the few, away from those fortified by special privilege, by monopolies, by inherited possession of natural rights which should be the property of all the people. The spirit of the new Labor Ministry, if it takes office, should prove a complete break with British tradition. Surely no English ministry has ever been so conscious of the solidarity of all mankind, so imbued with unselfish ideals, and so determined to improve British living conditions, not at the expense of other peoples, but through cooperation with others and by means which should benefit all concerned.

We are naturally aware that not all the members of the Labor Party are idealists or unselfish; we are aware that there are rifts within that party, cross-currents that may prove profoundly detrimental to its higher aims. We are well aware, too, of the comparative inexperience of many of those who must come to the front and of the power of tradition and established privilege everywhere to thwart reformers. We cannot forget for a moment that if the Labor Ministry takes office it will be as a minority party and that its leaders will never be able to free themselves from the consciousness that their existence as a ministry may be terminated any moment on any motion before the House against which the other two parties may unite. This is a terrible handicap, indeed, to place upon men who ought to have years in which to work out solutions for domestic and foreign problems that have been years in coming to their present menacing state. Yet we feel that even the attempt to govern one of the greatest of countries in a new spirit, and with new aims and a new philosophy, is of the deepest significance and the profoundest moment to all the world.

Just what we mean by the new spirit we may perhaps best illustrate by recalling to our readers the record of the man chosen to lead as prime minister if the Labor Party takes office. It is exactly five years ago that J. Ramsay MacDonald was overwhelmingly defeated for Parliament. He was then an outcast, almost a pariah—precisely as Campbell-Bannerman and Lloyd George had been in the days of the Boer War. A consistent pacifist, Mr. MacDonald opposed the World War, declining high office in the ministry and all the honors ensuing therefrom, to vote and work against the war. His voice was never still during that struggle in its demand for peace, upon the basis of human brotherhood and the teachings of Christianity. He was one of the minority of the European Socialists who held true to the pacifist teachings of that party whose apostasy when war came has been its undoing. Now the J. Ramsay Mac-

Donald who is about to be inducted into the highest office is the same Ramsay MacDonald. He has not changed an iota in his creed or one paragraph in his beliefs. He can look upon the European problem from the point of view of one who abhors war and will not yield a single inch to the war-god, from the standpoint of one who thinks internationally and is in no wise interested in governing England from the point of view of grab and of conquest, of iron and of oil. If he is not aboveboard in all his international dealings, then will he do violence to much that he has stood for. We cannot conceive of his regarding any problem solely from the point of view of what his countrymen may get out of it.

We venture to predict that whether it lasts six weeks, six months, or six years, the Ramsay MacDonald Ministry will carry on in the spirit of charity for all and malice toward none. So we shall consider its taking hold the very best assurance that the now threatening "next war" in Europe will be indefinitely postponed. We believe that this ministry will offer a court to which the peoples oppressed by the British militarism and imperialism of the past may repair, confident that they will receive a just, fair, and sympathetic hearing. We do not for one moment fear that it will be a class-government bent on asserting its will at the expense of other classes as classes. It cannot even attempt to put through a capital levy when it is still a minority government. We doubt if it will even have time or opportunity to dispossess the coal lords and barons and transfer their holdings to the people of England, as it ought to if it can. But we believe that the spirit in which it will go about such reforms as it may be permitted to achieve will hearten the masses all over the world and give a profound impulse to that democracy which has been so nearly destroyed by the war that pretended to safeguard it.

For us in America the experiment we are to witness must be of the greatest value, besides giving ground for boundless envy. Where in England men are coming to rule who have risen by sheer merit, integrity, and courage, and because they had a program and constructive ideas, we Americans seem destined for a presidential campaign offering no hope for advance or reform, which will be an utterly meaningless contest as to whether one group or another shall hold the offices and award the spoils. Between the two groups there is no difference; they are alike as twins; they both have the same characteristics and neither has a program worthy of a moment's serious consideration. We are destitute of leadership; in England men have come from laboratories, libraries, mines—there are forty-six miners in the new Parliament—forges, shipyards, mills, and factories, who have something to give, within whom there are the stirrings of leadership based upon the common belief that England will go down to ruin if the present order of selfishness and self-seeking is not ended. More than that, the mere fact that these men have come to the top in England will bring cheer to the conquered peoples of Europe now under the brutal heel of French militarism, to the struggling masses everywhere, as it will give pause to Poincaré himself. Their assumption of office will give the first real hope that, if they are given time, the problems of Europe may be settled, the wickedness and folly of Versailles overcome.



## The Nervousness of Mr. Hughes

THERE seems to be something in the very word "Russia" which makes men who talk about it lose their common sense. Mr. Hughes and Mr. Steklov, the editor of the Moscow *Izvestia*, alike have gone up into the thin clouds of abstract discourse. The wrangle began upon the question whether the Soviet Government was today engaged in an endeavor to overthrow by force and violence the Government of the United States and to hoist the red flag upon the White House flagpole. Today these two gentlemen are bitterly debating the question whether the Moscow editor, in an article written a year and a half ago, meant to imply that the Russian Government and the Third International were at heart akin, or whether he meant that the kinship was between the International and the Russian people. For the life of us, we cannot see that it matters.

Mr. Hughes will have no difficulty in proving that there is a relationship between the Soviet Government and the Third International, and if he wants to dig into the past he will be able to prove the most intimate coordination between the two organizations. In the days when the French, British, and American governments were invading Russia from Archangel and Vladivostok, and the German Government through Poland, the Third International was born as a weapon of war. In the days when these same governments were outfitting and financing hordes of freebooting adventurers who made themselves out to be devout counter-revolutionaries, the Soviet Government continued to utilize the revolutionary movement of the West for its own national purposes. That the leaders of the Soviet Government hoped for a Western revolution, both for social and national reasons, is undoubtedly true. Chicherin would have been as delighted to see Lord Curzon and Mr. Hughes pitched out of office by angry fellow-countrymen as those two estimable gentlemen would have been delighted to hear that Admiral Kolchak or Baron Wrangel had been able to order Chicherin, Lenin, and Trotsky shot against the Kremlin wall. But what has that got to do with the present question: Should the United States recognize the Government which has been ruling Russia for six years and more and has every prospect of continuing to do so for many years to come?

Russia's economics and rulers are her own business. If Mr. Hughes wishes to, he can discover abundant reason for believing, with his own chief, Mr. Coolidge, that Russia is returning to those "ancient ways" of capitalism which he so heartily approves. For our part, we regret it. We wish that Russia had been given an honest chance to try out the revolutionary theories of her rulers. For better or worse, the change is there. But what difference does it make? Does Mr. Hughes think that divine Providence has appointed him to watch over the internal economy of Russia? Surely he is not the man to refuse to deal with a country which refuses to pay its debts; he has not recalled his envoys from France, Italy, Rumania, or Poland. There remains but one question: Is the Soviet Government at present endeavoring to start a revolution in the United States?

On this question we urge our readers to study the article printed elsewhere in this issue by Mr. Louis Fischer, who has lately returned from a sojourn in Moscow. Mr. Fischer thinks that the Moscow Government is embarrassed by the

Third International, but that it rather likes to have it somewhere in the background, partly to keep up the spirits of those who still like to consider Soviet Russia a revolutionary country, and partly as a possible weapon in case the Western governments again try to overthrow the soviets. Mr. Hughes, who seems excessively nervous, may regard that as a threat to his continued tenure of office; we regret to report that we do not. We are not interested in it, anyway. The stability of the United States Government has never been threatened by European revolutionaries and it is difficult to believe that even in his most nervous moments Mr. Hughes is afraid that it will be.

## Houses orhovels?

HOUSING in America has grown not better but worse in the last three years. At least this is demonstrated for New York City by a survey just completed, and reports from other localities indicate that the situation is fairly typical. Three years ago, as a result of an inquiry into housing authorized by the Legislature of New York State, laws were passed placing certain limitations on rents and exempting from taxation for a period of ten years new construction for residential purposes. Both sets of legislation were bitterly assailed by interested parties as socialistic and unjust, and it was insistently argued that the rent laws would defeat the aim of the tax-exemption privileges by so restricting profits from building that nobody would erect houses even under favored conditions.

Experience has proved this argument to be false. Both sets of legislation have worked and worked well—but they have not worked well enough. The rent laws have saved many tenants from eviction and the more outrageous forms of exploitation, but in spite of them rents have been going up; likewise new houses have been built, but only of two sorts: expensive apartments for the well-to-do or single houses, not for rental but for occupancy by the owner. It has been found impossible to erect new apartment houses for people of small or moderate means, not because of the rent laws but because such tenants simply could not afford to pay the rentals that would have to be asked in order to return to the owners sufficiently large profits to make the investment attractive.

In consequence of this lack of building, coupled with a constantly increasing population, rents have been going up and congestion has been increasing in New York City, both at a rate that may truly be called startling. The Commission of Housing and Regional Planning has completed a survey of nine typical blocks, eight of which were reported on three years ago by the Reconstruction Commission. Some of the facts learned we referred to briefly last week. Rents show an increase of from 40 to 90 per cent, although factory wages—which are a fair test of workers' incomes—averaged \$28 a week for September, 1923, against \$28.44 for the same month in 1920. A change of tenant invariably means an increase in the rent of a given apartment. In the houses investigated, it was found that in instance after instance new tenants were called upon to pay 50 to 300 per cent more than the previous occupants. "Improvements" are always made an excuse for higher rents, usually on a scandalously exorbitant basis.

Most of the families included in the survey reported incomes under \$2,000 a year. The proportion spent for rent was 21.3 per cent. A study by the United States Bureau



of Labor Statistics in 1918-1919 showed that a comparable group (having incomes of \$2,100 a year) in New York City spent 14.4 per cent on rent. In other words, higher rents have been paid, not out of higher wages but by a decrease in the amount spent for food, education, health, and other items essential to a civilized life. Many cases of inability to give children high-school or vocational education are attributed to soaring rents.

Perhaps even worse than increasing rents is the evidence of greater congestion and the sanitary and moral evils that result. In 1920—when congestion was regarded as menacing—there were, nevertheless, 125 vacant apartments in the blocks surveyed. This year there proved to be only twenty-five. In each block conditions of crowding were found to exist such as the following: 14 persons in 6 rooms, 12 in 4 rooms, 10 in 3 rooms, 6 in 2 rooms. Families are forced to double up in single apartments, or boarders are taken in. There is no chance for privacy, cleanliness, or quiet.

What do these facts mean? Plainly, that the construction of new houses, or even the repair of old ones, for people of small and moderate means has ceased; not only that, but there is no visible prospect of its resumption by private capital seeking profits. In other words, private initiative as a means of furnishing homes for the great mass of our people has broken down. New York and our other industrial States ought therefore at once to appoint commissions to recommend alternatives. Some slight hope may be placed in cooperative building and in organizations able to raise money for homes from persons willing to accept a nominal return on their money; but such efforts are likely to be too scattered and too meager to fill the need. We must accept the necessity of State or municipal building, and it must not consist merely of a few charity tenements for the professional poor. It should embrace various kinds of housing, not to be rented at a loss but at the lowest terms possible in order to cover the cost of construction plus interest and sinking-fund charges on the money invested.

## What to Do with the Doughtys?

IT was Mr. H. L. Mencken who, in the course of his invaluable researches into the curiosities of American life, discovered the redoubtable Professor Leonard Doughty of Austin, Texas. In the *Alcalde* of Austin, Doughty had fulminated against the newer literature not only of America but of the world, and in a weighty and compact article in the *Literary Review* Mencken set forth that Doughty had, in the great words of Dogberry, written himself down an ass. This was self-evident to some as soon as the words of the eloquent Doughty were exposed to their eyes. What, however, of those to whom the mental outfit of Doughty did not so immediately reveal its true character?

They exist; they swarm over mountains and prairies. They are not always devoid of intelligence. The *Dallas News*, which carries, once a week, a not altogether despicable book page, calls Doughty "a critic whom lesser men may well fear." Yes, Doughty is mighty. He represents the critical reactions of the Ku Klux mind, the belligerent sense of election cherished by vulgar and ignorant men. Like these he has a shattering sense of inferiority, for which

he compensates by an insane exaltation of himself and his kind.

These terms are mild enough if one takes the trouble to analyze a little the central philippic of Doughty as quoted by Mr. Mencken. Our modern literature, according to the Texan, is the result of the "nadir of sordidness or moral perversion" reached by the literature of the Germans.

The stain of that yellow, bastard blood is upon much of the "authorship" of the United States. . . . The modern "authorship" that makes the "books" upon our stalls is of those dread middle races, Aryan indeed but interminably mixed and simmered in the devil's cauldron of Middle Europe, and spewed out of Italy and France, and off the dismal Slavic frontiers, and out of that dismal and cankered East, that like a horde of chancre-laden rats are brought to swarm down the gang-planks of a thousand ships upon our shores.

Thus, in one sentence, Doughty destroys the world. It is foul. Only America is clean—and only white, Protestant America.

Nothing can be done with Doughty. Something can, perhaps, be done with the people who hold Doughty's general views in a less virulent and morbid form. We are not altogether guiltless of the ease with which they yield to these particular fallacies. They think that Theodore Dreiser and Sherwood Anderson are corrupt and wicked men who deliberately and coldly manufacture sinful books for sale. We know better than that; we know that art, when it is truly art, is inevitable expression, that it obeys an unanswerable inner voice. But have we ourselves—liberal critics, editors, thinkers—been wholly guiltless of creating in life the groundwork and foundation of the violent moralistic superstitions of the Doughtys?

We set them a bad example by our little cowardices, our unobtrusive evasions. We shrink from noble and creative living; we speak softly of the incomparable achievements of the German genius; we apologize for the strength and veracity of the most notable writing which, since Emerson, Thoreau, and Whitman, America has produced. In brief, the intellectuals of America have an inveterate habit of cat-like treading. They mask that tread as fastidiousness, as aloofness, as objectivity. It is nothing of the sort. It is prudence; it is fear of the Doughtys next door and across the way.

In the life of the spirit he who is prudent is lost. He who counts the cost has already stripped himself of his all. In these matters there must be no regard for any Doughtys nor for anyone's prejudices, nor for anyone's feelings. The life of art and thought is betrayed by even a consciousness of allegiance. Identification with it must be complete; questioning of its nature, freedom, aims must be unthinkable. Doughty and his followers are not unconscious of our apologies, our underemphasis, our strange internal dissensions. People who think are a minority in every country. There are Doughtys in every land the sun shines upon. But except in America even the peasantry is a little ashamed not to laugh at them. Here we are deadly solemn. Why shouldn't it be so, when our most intelligent and liberal papers discuss the morality of Sherwood Anderson, wonder whether a limited censorship would not be wise, call Hauptmann depressing and Bataille brilliant, and pretend to have soot in their eyes when some one strikes out for the necessary freedom of a humane and honorable life? To jeer at Doughty is not even to touch him. We can destroy him only by purging our souls of all in them that resembles him.

# What Is Progressivism?

(The Nation's Weekly Washington Letter)

By WILLIAM HARD

**I** HEREWITH offer a lock of Senator Shipstead's hair to the person who will provide the best and most useful answer to the question: What is "progressivism"? The public necessity for this nation-wide epoch-making prize contest is as follows:

In each house of Congress we now have a "progressive group." At the core of it in each house there is the Republican Party of the State of Wisconsin. In the Senate this core is Robert Marion La Follette himself. In the House of Representatives it is ten La Follette Republican Wisconsin congressmen.

Additionally in the Senate and in the House of Representatives there are various wrappings around this core. The first wrapping consists of senators and of representatives who are so "progressive" that they belong to the progressive group and act with it steadily. Among such senators may be mentioned Brookhart of Iowa and among such representatives may be mentioned Woodruff of Michigan.

The second wrapping consists of senators and of representatives who belong to the progressive group but act with it only part of the time. Among them may be mentioned Senator Capper of Kansas and Representative Schall of Minnesota.

The third wrapping consists of senators and of representatives who esteem themselves as "progressives," but who do not belong to the progressive group at all. Without belonging to it, they nevertheless go about wearing the progressive label. Among such mavericks of the progressive fold may be mentioned Senators Johnson of California and Norbeck of South Dakota, along with Representatives Kelly of Pennsylvania and Rathbone of Illinois.

Finally there is, for instance, Senator Medill McCormick of Illinois, who by championing the budget system became the author of the most useful practical measure for the improvement of governmental administration in this day and who now, by championing the federal anti-child-labor constitutional amendment, is about to become the chief legislative author of the most broadly useful federal social reform likely to be enacted by this Congress. He is also the Senate's most drastic champion of enlarged inheritance taxes. It happens, however, that he is regarded by the core of the progressive group and also by all of its wrappings as an alien.

Moreover, it appears that McCormick is in favor of a bonus to ex-soldiers and it would accordingly appear, if McCormick is a conservative, that the bonus is conservative. This supposition regarding the bonus is increased by the fact that Senator Borah is anti-bonus. Borah is a progressive and it must be (must it not?) that the bonus is therefore conservative and even reactionary.

At the same time it is perfectly clear that the bonus must be progressive. Robert Marion La Follette is in favor of it. So is Hiram Johnson. And Calvin Coolidge is against it. This proves that it is progressive.

A similar clarity in the matter of the meaning of progressivism can be observed in the field of the tariff. La Follette and Borah opposed a high tariff. This proves that a high tariff is reactionary. Senators Brookhart and

Ladd and Frazier, however, are trying to get the high tariff on wheat made higher. This proves that a high tariff is radical.

Senators Borah and Shipstead are vigilant enemies of bureaucracy. They are distressed to see federal employees multiplying like locusts over the land. Senator Norris of Nebraska, however, an indubitable progressive, goes in for large governmental endeavors in the buying and selling of farm products.

The use of governmental money for the rescue of farmers is sometimes thought to be a proof of progressivism. The difficulty in accepting that proof is that by the same line of reasoning it would be possible to prove that our present "revolving fund" for railroads is progressive. Large sums of governmental money have been loaned out of that fund to railroads during the last few years to rescue them from their troubles. I shall be unable, as a judge in this prize contest, to admit that the Atlanta, Birmingham and Atlantic and the Kansas City, Mexico and Orient railroad companies are illustrations of the operations of progressivism simply because they have been permitted in their poverty to borrow money from the federal Government, while I in similar circumstances have to persuade a banker.

What the judges in this contest will require is that the contestants shall lay down the philosophic difference between "progressivism" and "conservatism." It will not be enough to say that the government shall make the taxpayer work for a certain class just because the taxpayer is already made to work for a certain other class.

Nor, I may add, will it be enough to pick on some one special problem and elevate it into the total salvation of humanity. Senator Shipstead, on being reproached by me the other day on the failure of the progressive group to come forward with an agreed bill for the improvement of our well-known "agricultural depression," remarked:

"The trouble is that it is like the blind man and the elephant. Grasping his tail, some of us say that he is like a snake and that the way to solve him is through railroad rates. Fondling his ear, some of us proclaim his resemblance to a fan and declare that the only way of solving him is through the Federal Reserve Board and the control of credit. Grasping his legs, some of us undertake to say that he resembles a planting of large trees and that what is needed is an ax to be laid to the roots of the high prices of the commodities which the farmer has to buy. Everybody is perfectly sure of a leg or an ear or a tail, but nobody yet has a picture of the elephant."

The purpose of this prize contest is to develop a picture of the elephant in the matter of agricultural improvement and in the matter of all other improvement nationally and socially considered.

The definition which will win the prize will be one which will clearly show to every citizen of the United States whether he is a progressive or a conservative. This will be an inestimable boon to the whole country politically and conversationally. When a candidate arises on a platform to commend himself to the electors, somebody in the audience will at once read off to him the definition of progressivism,



as in this contest developed and adopted; and the candidate will instantly have to choose between running as an authoritative standard-bearer of progressivism or as a confessed adherent of conservatism or worse.

Imitating the managers of the Bok peace plan prize contest, I intend to choose as judges a set of persons whose opinions I absolutely perfectly well know beforehand. Unlike Mr. Bok's managers, however, I intend to have a set of judges who are not overwhelmingly in favor of the League of Nations or of federal financial aid to farmers or of any other one theory of peace or prosperity. My judges are going to be persons of diverse views.

I ask my readers to remember that we are going into a national election in which there is a certain chance that progressivism may step forward as the organizer of a new party. I ask them to remember that while this party may be relatively small this year it may grow into a great party if it is based on a sound philosophy and a clearly defined and readily understood distinction between itself and the older parties already existing. It is not out of mere flippancy that I suggest to the readers of *The Nation* an effort to try to find out—and to try explicitly to say—just what

progressivism is and just what it is not. No new progressive party will get very far simply on a grouch or simply on a fad. It will need two things: a point of view and an outstanding issue illustrating that point of view.

Here accordingly I ask my readers: What is that point of view? I ask them what *is* it—what is it in *essence*—to be a progressive?

If they all of them are stumped, and cannot reply, I will print the answer myself. If I hear from them, at the Washington office of *The Nation*, 505 Albee Building, Washington, D. C., I will submit their suggested definitions to Robert Marion La Follette, who ought to know what progressivism is, and to Senator Reed Smoot of Utah, who ought to know what it is not. Any answer that gets through that sieve ought to be a good answer. It ought to be non-partisan and realistic. If the two judges should by any chance disagree, I will make the decision.

In truth, being myself somewhat puzzled as to what progressivism is, I herewith invoke as a jury the country's corps of greatest experts, longest trained, and most zealously informed—namely, the readers of *The Nation*. I clear my desk and await the answer.

## Building the National Lie

By JEAN DE PIERREFEU

(This article is taken from a book by M. de Pierrefeu entitled "Plutarch Lied," to be published in the United States by Alfred A. Knopf. The author was a lieutenant of reserves in the French army during the war attached to General Staff Headquarters, where he wrote the official communiques and was responsible for the dispatches from the front given out to the press.)

THE belligerents in the Great War did not ask their propagandists, disguised as historians, to be either loyal or truthful: they asked for the direct contrary. To understand the difficulties which the historians of the future will have to surmount when they come to write the history of the Great War, it is necessary to understand the nature of this institution of propaganda. I believe that in no previous century has reality been so openly travestied as in the period through which we have just passed. The tremendous struggle between two groups of nations necessitated the employment of every means both of attack and defense. The "moral arm" could not be neglected.

To gain the sympathy of the neutrals, to obtain from them the material support which was expected of them, while persuading them to withhold it from the other side, to succeed in the end in launching them in their turn against the enemy—such were the various aims upon which each of the two groups of allies concentrated their activities.

With a due regard to the question of being in the right—strange, indeed, in this unloosing of brute force—each side was in the first instance zealous to place the onus of having been the aggressor on its adversary. But since, in the decisions of nations, interest prevails over sentiment, it was essential for each belligerent to prove himself the stronger in the eyes of the neutrals. Thus from these two motives there developed two kinds of propaganda, parallel but contradictory, which for a long time kept the neutrals hesitating and perplexed.

The Germans, better prepared than we were at the start, and induced by temperament and by education to accept the

national lie, showed us the way. With a rare insolence, their agents all over the world spread the most tendentious rumors; their communiques, supported by telegrams, wireless "news," newspaper articles, pamphlets, and tracts, presented the course of operations in the most favorable light. The Allies, in their turn, gradually instituted a vast network of propaganda inspired by the same necessity of emphasizing successes and minimizing reverses. In every country the intellectuals were called upon to furnish arguments in this new kind of war. The world became like an immense Sorbonne, resounding to the noise of controversies, denials, replies, and explanations. In those four years the human brain enlarged its paraphernalia of sophisms and quibbles more than it had done during several preceding centuries of brilliant civilization.

In this struggle France showed that she was the intellectual nation *par excellence*. She realized at once that the systematic lie might easily be of disservice to her interests. What mattered above all else was to win the confidence of the neutrals, to make them sure that our information was true. For this purpose it was necessary to avoid a blunt denial of matters of actual fact, against which even the most audacious falsehoods will not prevail. There was a subtle art in our propaganda: Ludendorff himself has bitterly admitted its results. The natural vulgarity of the Germans, their lack of taste, their cynicism, and their contempt for the niceties inevitably incited them to exceed the bounds of plausibility. In reality the greatest of our advantages came from our opponents; for most frequently our task was simply to emphasize their inept impostures. The common sense of the nations themselves did the rest. But, however honorable the French share in this campaign of persuasion may have been, its productions have no pretensions to being a supplement to history. This is easily understood. The historian, in obedience to a disinterested sentiment, forces himself to portray events in an exact manner. He loosens the chain of cause and effect. Placed



above the protagonists, he favors neither the one nor the other, but he ought to enter into the mind of both, in order to scrutinize their actions from within and from without. His final aim being to make clear the lesson to be learned from the facts and the meaning of events, he is not afraid either to do justice to the enemy or to emphasize the mistakes of his own country. This latter task, if he wishes to remain above the foibles of men, he must fulfil in the spiritual interest of truth: he carries it out even more conscientiously if he is zealous for the interests of his own country. This is the only kind of patriotism which is permitted to the historian. Such an attitude was not fashionable during the war: the necessity of winning came before any other preoccupation. But unfortunately we have got into the way of prolonging such ambiguity beyond the time when it should be permitted.

Propaganda at home, intended to sustain the morale of the nation, could count upon admiration without reticence or restriction. How could one keep the nation confident unless one could persuade it that everything was going well, that its leaders were without blemish, that everything which was undertaken succeeded? The censorship came to the assistance of the propagandists, toning down the zeal of the critics or else suppressing them altogether. Hence arose an official optimism, a process of wheedling, the habit of exalting merit above its true worth, of concealing what was ugly or mediocre, of excusing errors; and hence, again, a kind of freemasonry of indulgence and blindness, calculated to prevent an accurate view of the situation and to atrophy common sense.

It can be understood that those who benefited by this wonderful optimism became accustomed to it and therefore unable to recognize the truth. During the war, to speak frankly, to give evidence of possessing the critical spirit, as did Georges Clemenceau during the three years when he was only a journalist, was equivalent to being regarded as a danger to one's country. It was useless for him to justify himself, to affirm his zeal for the public well-being and his passionate desire to see the nation shake itself free of routine and galvanize all its energy toward victory: he was execrated by the Staff and abused as a defeatist. His paper, *l'Homme Enchaîné*, was frequently seized and confiscated in the armies, on the ground that it was guilty of demoralizing the troops and furthering the plans of the enemy by ruining that blind trust in his leaders which is indispensable to the soldier. But was not this equivalent to proclaiming the outstanding virtue of the lie? As if the spectacle of the mistakes which were made and the deplorable abuses which were so abundant in the course of the campaign were not sufficient in themselves, had they ever been fully known, to spread discouragement among the fighting men! That Germany finally became panic-stricken was largely due to the fact that the critical spirit, under the iron hand of Ludendorff, could not break through to the light. Once facts could speak, the tissue of lies, official and military, was revealed as powerless to persuade the Germans that all was well.

But it will be remembered amid what a babel of curses the voices of truth had to enforce a hearing. The "good fellows" never ceased to cry: "Sacrilege!"; the High Command said that its task was being made impossible; the censorship thundered its denunciations. The politicians became an object of public contempt because of it. Clemenceau alone, by virtue of his vigorous action as head of the

Government and as a reward of victory, managed to obtain total abolition for his past lack of discipline.

This obliging spirit, this patriotic modesty, this wish for admiration at all costs have not disappeared. Even nowadays whoever attempts to judge the men and the circumstances of the Great War is still regarded as contemptible. Because the struggle ended in our favor we have forgotten those evil days when, with victory turning her face away from us, we took stock of our inadequacies and our weaknesses. An incredible conspiracy exists in France at this very moment. No one dares to write the truth. It is no more than whispered, and when someone or other breaks the pact, people disown him rather than recognize that he is right.

For my part, the spectacle makes me indignant. And I have reached the point of saying: Of what use were so many sacrifices?

I have no respect for that kind of patriot who, under the pretext of putting his country on its guard against the lethargy of common sense, loads it with reproaches and unites his voice with those of its worst enemies. One must avoid extremes. The search for truth must be undertaken calmly. One cannot, it is true, even by exercising wisdom, moderation, loyalty, have the least hope of soothing the irritation of inveterate optimists or of ferocious defenders of the official truth. For these are not to be convinced. Those who meddle with the edifice of legendary history, that marvelous romance of pure glory and easy genius which—according to the theories of those propaganda agents, Plutarch and other inventors of the Lives of Illustrious Men—is unfolded, devoid of all shadow, by dint of miracles and the lightning strokes of genius, ought to realize that no distinction will be made between them and those who insult their own country. This sad fate awaits them because in a matter which is essentially military they have tried to introduce common sense and a spirit of criticism.

The history of the war, as it is concocted today, depends upon material which has a military origin. Now one need go no further than to discover that the realities are toned down. I have already said that at the height of the struggle it was important to sustain morale and to *seem* victorious. All the documents drawn up during the campaign bear the mark of this preoccupation. Not that the truth is omitted from them, but it is so cleverly concealed that at first sight one is not able to discover it. I have quoted at length in "G.Q.G. Secteur I" an official paper in which it is shown that Verdun was not a surprise for the High Command and that all dispositions to meet the attack had been arranged beforehand at leisure. In "L'Offensive du 16 avril" I have given General Nivelle's report to the Government, in which this disastrous operation was glorified as a brilliant success. It is enough to read the memoirs of Ludendorff and Hindenburg to realize that the position is the same among our late enemies. The military mind does not regard things in the same light as the historian. The documents drawn up by the staff are intended to screen itself and not to bring out the truth. By virtue of these documents, it happens nearly always that in some regrettable affair both chiefs and subordinates seem entitled to congratulations. Whether orders were of any value, and whether they were given at the right time and place, are details into which the Staff does not enter. I am not in the

\* The author's first book, a collection of military reminiscences, attacking the methods of the French High Command.

least afraid to say that one cannot accept what emanates from the Staff without a most searching criticism. By simply reading them through, one gets the impression that everything is for the best in the best of all possible worlds. In the whole series of communiques there is not a single one which does not infer success, and does not imply, in its very mode of expression, a certain satisfaction, however disappointing may be the facts which it contains.

History, given the links of a certain chain of facts, joins them together afterwards in a logical way. It is an abstract science which has only a distant bearing on reality. An historical account is always a transcription from the real. It is quite natural that this work of abstracting and arranging becomes more delicate when those who carry it out are directly interested in it. Already, under these influences, the history of the war has undergone modifications which, though they are easy to detect now, will be impossible to perceive ten years hence.

The slow transformation of historical events takes place in the form of embellishment. Each nation creates an idealized image of itself which its citizens unconsciously carry about with them and which is gradually built up in the course of centuries. This embellished image represents what the nation would like to be, the ideal to which it desires to attain. In its more pathetic periods the nation sometimes tends, by a noble effort of will, to approach this ideal. Every story which reflects the image is declared true, and every man who appears to be of a type more or less approaching the ideal is admired without reserve.

Hence, certain national defects are exalted above the most solid qualities. The man who is the incarnation of the brilliant faults of his race is, unfortunately, more popular than he who is the incarnation of its useful aspects. Mangin and Pétain furnish a perfect illustration of this. He who is, with Joffre and Foch, the great craftsman of the war, enjoys a personal prestige infinitely less than the intrepid general whose name is synonymous with attack, with the *furia francese*.

History has not been evolved like psychology. When the latter, in order to get closer to reality, was including within its range the facts of semi-consciousness, history still remained in the stage of abstraction. The historian, favored by being thus behindhand and working on materials which are already the result of a simplification, of a filtering of reality, traces his pattern of events and his historical line, but omits, because they are exceptions, a mass of facts which are often of capital importance.

For a great length of time history has been the military history of nations, just because in this domain the primary aim is to simplify and on no account to become embarrassed by holding too close to reality. The result alone is of importance: and the result is attributed directly and entirely to a few eminent personalities, "representative men," as Emerson called them, who are drawn as ideal and as in harmony with their deeds. The same thing happens in political history: and hence comes that long line of statues, painted either black or white, which are the landmarks of the past.

With what zeal have those who undertake to write the official history hurried back to simplification and idealization, in their eager desire to safeguard the national interest, to avoid wounding our *amour-propre*, and to exalt our country!

What a ray of light is given us by the works which have appeared in such strange haste! But should history be

written for the *beati possidentes*, with a view to keeping the people to a certain way of thinking and creating useful idols for it? Instantly the whole historical edifice of past ages appears to us as suspect.

Plutarch lied—either to order, or through artlessness, or because he was afraid! Great men, if I may judge them by those whom I have seen with my own eyes, are not as the historian makes them out to be. We need actual experience before we can realize that there is a gulf fixed between historical reality and history.

## What Mr. Hughes Needs to Know

By LOUIS FISCHER

AT a public meeting last winter in Moscow Trotzky stated that there was very little chance for a communist revolution in the United States. At about the same time Karl Radek, who has come to be known as the Third International's arch-propagandist, told the writer that "revolutions cannot be transported in suit cases." Neither pamphlets nor money, he explained a moment later, can produce a revolution in a country where the objective facts are not likely to bring that revolution to the point of precipitation.

From November, 1917, till the end of 1920 the Bolsheviks were convinced that the world was ripe for an international upheaval engineered by advance-guard proletarians. During that period the Soviet Government felt, and its leaders often reiterated, that it could not exist side by side with a hostile capitalist world. One or the other must go, and they were intent on making the other go. Accordingly they spent much time, energy, and money in attempting to further the world revolution.

Internationalism reached its climax in the Russo-Polish war of 1920. The decline was immediate and precipitous. Russia today is no longer prepared to pull revolutionary chestnuts out of the fire to its own hurt. The slogan now is, "Russia first." Many Bolsheviks feel that they must intrench their own position before they try to extend the revolution. In fact, there is a growing feeling that unless they make a success of the task they have undertaken in Russia no nation will be willing to follow their example.

There are other elements in the Russian Communist Party (which controls the Russian Government in the same way as the Republican Party controls the present federal Administration in the United States) which insist that if no international revolution develops within, say, the next ten or fifteen years the Soviet system will be modified beyond recognition and assume the form of a half-radical regime much like that of New Zealand or Australia. Radek once wrote this sentiment into a pamphlet. Rather than risk such moral defeat Radek, and with him Bucharin, Zinoviev, and others, would stake the safety of the Russian regime in order to effect a revolution in some European countries.

Between these two points of view—the national and the international—there is a constant struggle in the Communist Party. The proponents of the international viewpoint are too weak to determine the actions of the Russian Government (though sometimes when their case is good they score a victory) but they are strong enough to keep the Communist International alive and to extract some minute measure of aid for it from the Government.



The German situation last summer and autumn mirrored these divergences. Those who were close to German and Russian affairs were convinced that the Russian Government did not want a Communist revolution in Germany. Much of the editorial writing in the *Pravda* and *Izvestia*, and of the orating in Moscow and the provinces, which might have led one to believe otherwise, was for home consumption—the Communist leaders dared not permit their revolutionary elements in Russia to suspect them of betraying the international revolution. Part of the Third International's exchequer probably was put at the disposal of the German Communist Party, but it failed to gain that without which it would have been folly to try a revolution: the promise of support from the Russian Government. (Speaking of the possibility of a German revolution, Trotsky said to Senator King: "In any case, we certainly should not intervene in any internal civil war.") And even Radek, who felt that the situation called for a revolution, was not certain that the German Communists could carry the day unaided; for a time therefore he flirted with other non-Communist German revolutionary forces.

The Russian Government withheld its support because it had too much to lose from a German upheaval. Had the Germans succeeded in setting up a Communist regime Russia would have been called on to send money and food; had serious consequences developed (if, for instance, Germany had been attacked by a foreign counter-revolutionary force) the Russians would have been obliged to overrun Poland and march the Red army to the defense of their German comrades, which might have meant a war with France and a general European imbroglio. Moreover, an upset in Germany would at least temporarily have paralyzed its industrial life and thus interfered with the importation into Russia of large quantities of machinery and supplies which are indispensable to the process of economic rehabilitation to which the Soviets are bending their every effort.

Here was the Communists' "best bet." All were agreed that at no time had Germany been riper for a Left revolution and at no time was it more likely to succeed than in the summer and autumn of 1923. A word from the Moscow Kremlin would have started the revolt; but that word was not forthcoming. The only word to the German Communists came from the Communist International's headquarters just outside the Kremlin, but that was not sufficient.

If then the Russian Government did not favor a revolution in Germany where all the objective factors in the situation were propitious, how far-fetched is it to speak of a Russian attempt to precipitate a revolution in England or France, or, of all places, in the United States where capitalism is young and virile, the labor movement weak and conservative, and the Communists a handful. (In Germany there are more organized Communists than in Russia.)

Nevertheless the Third International talks world revolution—that is its stock in trade. In the first half of the revolutionary period when the Soviets were convinced that for them it was either "world revolution or death" the Communist International was a convenient instrument through which propaganda could be conducted. Then the Government seconded the efforts of the International. But at present, when Moscow seeks to enter into diplomatic and commercial relations with all capitalistic countries, when it has decided that it can exist side by side with these capitalistic countries, the Third International has become an impediment and an encumbrance, from which the Soviet

Government has clearly been trying to disassociate itself.

The last congress of the Third International (Moscow, November, 1922) received notoriously little attention from the Government. Stalin, Kalinin, Dzerzhinski, Kamenev, Chicherin, Krassin, and others of the very highest government officials did not participate in the proceedings; some did not even attend a single session. Lenin came once and talked Russia but not world revolution; Trotsky, having told the congress that a world revolution was not imminent, made one address in which he expressed himself more bitterly against Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries than against the capitalist nations. These men have ceased to be merely Bolsheviks—they are bolshevik statesmen and diplomats, which is quite another thing. The Russian leaders were forced, by reason of the destruction wrought in the country by intervention, blockade, and the effects of their policies, to adopt a nationalist program which was not only incompatible with the International's policy; it was anti-International. When to send the Red army to Germany might have meant the setting up of a Communist regime in Poland and Germany and perhaps the precipitation of red revolts in other countries, the Red army remained at home because the venture would have been expensive for Russia. When Fascism conquered in Italy, the Bolsheviks, with an eye to fortifying Russia's diplomatic position, flirted with Mussolini for *de jure* recognition instead of doing the communistic thing and declaring war to the knife against him. There are many more instances to show that the Soviet Government, the creature and tool of the Russian Communist Party, is pursuing a policy diametrically opposed to the fundamental and most important principle of the Communist International: the promotion of the world revolution.

This assuredly is an anomaly; the Russian Communist Party, the most important component part of the Third International, pursues a policy antagonistic to that of the Third International. But it is no greater an anomaly than a Communist party which permits and even encourages private capitalism. Through the Russian Government the Russian Communist Party is negotiating with oil trusts and with imperialists; its representative kisses the hand of the Pope's emissary, and boards a battleship to bow to a king. This is the curse the Bolsheviks brought upon themselves when they became a government. It is an anomaly and it is incongruous, but it is a product of necessity. In the same way the Russian Government's renunciation of the ways of the Third International is the product of necessity. In their heart of hearts the Communists have no more given up the hope for an ultimate world revolution than they have forever renounced socialism in Russia. But they realize that for a protracted period both the world revolution and Russian socialism must be shelved.

It is the price the Russian Communist-Nationalists are willing to pay in order to help Russia back to its feet. Whether they will be willing to continue to pay the price and whether the Communist-Nationalists will maintain the upper hand over the Communist-Internationalists depends to a very large extent on how much Russia gets for the price it pays. If by the victory of the moderates Russia wins trade and recognition and peace they will not consider the cost too excessive; if it brings them nothing but recrimination, criticism, and a continued diplomatic blockade they may act like the bad boy who feels that if he isn't being rewarded for it there's no use being good.



## American Warships and Chinese Money

By MA SOO

IT is claimed by the United States and the other Powers that in sending warships to Canton they have only done what is required of them by treaty for the proper protection of the revenues of the Chinese customs. This claim, however, is not borne out by the facts of the case. The Canton Government has never sought and is not seeking to interfere with the customs revenues earmarked for the payment of the Boxer indemnity to the foreign Powers. Nor is it questioning just now the right of the foreign Powers to control the Chinese customs, although as exercised at present that right cannot be justified by the terms of the Peace Protocol of 1901.

What the Canton Government demands and insists upon is that after the Powers have deducted the proper share from the customs revenues required for the service of foreign debts charged on the customs of the whole of China, the surplus funds of the Canton customs should be used for the benefit of the people and government of Canton and not be given over to the Peking Government to make war on the Cantonese people. The Canton Government contends that this is an act of simple justice.

The foreign Powers are concerned with the Chinese customs revenues only in so far as these revenues are used for the payment of the Boxer indemnity and certain foreign debts charged on the customs. They are not concerned with what is left over after they have received the payments due them. How these surplus funds shall be employed is not a matter for the Powers to decide; it is a purely internal affair, the settlement of which lies with the Chinese people. For the Powers to dispatch warships to Canton to dictate the disposal of these surplus funds, at a time when Canton is at war with Peking, is an unjustifiable intervention in the interests of one faction in a civil war.

It cannot be said that the United States is intervening as required by treaty, for the matter in dispute has been shown to be outside the scope of the protocol of 1901. The Powers themselves admitted this when they permitted 13.7 per cent of the total surplus of the entire Chinese customs to be paid over to the Canton Government in 1919. This payment continued until the spring of 1920 when at the instance of the State Department in Washington it was stopped, for reasons known only to that Department.

Neither can it be said that the United States is intervening to protect the lives and property of its nationals, for both American lives and property are safe in Canton. Indeed, it will be interesting to recall in this connection that during the recent bandit raid at Lincheng when Americans were kidnapped and their lives were in danger, the American Government contented itself with merely sending notes of protest to Peking, and not a single American soldier was dispatched to rescue the victims although at that time there was an American regiment stationed at the Peking end of the railway line. And now when Americans are not even molested in Canton, the United States Government has seen fit to send six warships there, with their guns trained on that unfortified city.

What, then, are the reasons for this intervention on the part of the United States? It is easy to understand why

Great Britain seeks to withhold the surplus from the Canton customs, because British bankers have made large advances to the Peking Government and they hope to retrieve themselves from these funds. It can also be explained why France is holding up these surplus revenues, because she is trying to get her portion of the Boxer indemnity paid her in gold francs instead of francs paid at the rate of exchange fixed in 1901 by treaty. But the United States—why should its naval power be employed for the forcible collection of customs revenues from Canton so that the Peking militarists may flourish? Is it to the interest of American wireless corporations that the present regime in Peking be maintained? Or is the United States doing this for the benefit of the few Chicago bankers who have lent five million dollars to the Peking Government? Or, again, is it exerting itself on behalf of the great house of Morgan which has bought up all the Hukwang Railway bonds formerly owned by the German Government but canceled by China since the Great War?

Whatever the reasons, the sending of warships by the United States and the other Powers in connection with the Canton customs funds is a distinct violation of the Nine Power Treaty signed at the Washington Conference, in which the Powers solemnly agreed to respect the sovereignty of China. Since the Powers only recognize the Peking Government as the Central Government of China, it is with that Government alone that they should deal in regard to any alleged violation of treaty rights by the provinces. In intervening in the matter of the Canton customs surplus, the Powers have, in addition to violating China's sovereignty, stultified themselves by admitting in fact that the government which they have recognized as the Central Government of China does not really govern the whole of China and is unable to collect taxes from the provinces without foreign armed assistance.

In spite of the threatening attitude of the United States and the other Powers, with their naval demonstration in Canton waters, the Canton Government cannot allow the customs revenues collected at the Port of Canton to go into the hands of the Peking Government with which to buy arms to kill the Cantonese people. To permit this would be treason against the people of Canton and an act of self-destruction by the Canton Government. It is therefore the sacred duty of the Canton Government to prevent this money from being turned over to Peking at all cost. If, however, the Canton Government, on account of outside interference, is unable to preserve the Canton customs surplus for the use of the Cantonese people; or, if for some reason it is rendered powerless to prevent this surplus from being made use of by the Peking Government against Canton; then it will be compelled, as a matter of self-preservation, to declare Canton a free port, abolishing all import and export duties. That, at least, will save the Canton Government from being forced to give aid to its enemy.

In the meantime, the continued presence of the foreign warships in Canton with their warlike preparations is a source of great irritation to the Cantonese people. There is no doubt that with an incensed mob provoked into being by the overbearing conduct of the Powers, the landing of marines from the foreign warships in Canton will surely meet with resistance and be the occasion for much bloodshed. If that should come to pass, the United States, which has the largest naval force in Canton, together with the other Powers, must be held morally responsible.

## France and Soviet Russia Join Hands

By SCOTT NEARING

**F**RANCE emerged from the war with a home population of 41 millions, living in an area about four times the size of New York State, and with an additional 50 millions of colonial populations scattered over four million square miles in Asia and Africa. Before the war France was rated as the wealthiest country in Europe, and the events of the past ten years have enhanced this position by weakening some of her most formidable rivals. Superficially France is both rich and powerful.

But empires are costly. France has not only the expenses of imperial administration in the colonies, the cost of maintaining a huge army, of building a great air fleet, and of supporting a navy—but also the expense of preserving imperial influence in the "kept" countries erected around Russia as a barrier against sovietism and as a possible market for French goods and French investments. Such diplomatic and financial adventures are very expensive. A recent estimate places the French loans to satellite states, made since the armistice, at 5,161 millions of francs, distributed as follows: Anti-Bolshevik Russia, 481 millions; Esthonia, 17 millions; Latvia, 6 millions; Lithuania, 1 million; Czecho-Slovakia, 574 millions; Yugoslavia, 1,795 millions; Rumania, 1,181 millions; Poland, 1,056 millions; Hungary, 1 million; and Austria, 55 millions. In addition there is a pending loan of 1.5 billions to Hungary and the Little Entente. Can France hope to carry these necessary costs of modern imperialism?

France has behind her a thousand years of aristocratic culture and civilization, of agriculture and of craftsmanship. Under the Old Regime, the rulers made merry at the expense of an impoverished peasantry. To be sure there was always the skilled craft-worker, but the peasant was and is the backbone of France, and until the French Revolution he was exploited and landless. There has been a slight decrease in the proportion of the rural population of France. In 1870, two-thirds of the population was rural; in 1901, 59 per cent; and in 1911, 55.8 per cent. In Germany, with a total gainfully occupied population of 28 millions (1907), 12 millions were classified as industrial. In France, with 13 millions gainfully occupied (1911), only 4.9 millions were classified as industrial.

The heavy industries of France, like her population, have grown slowly. The French population was 36 millions in 1871 and 39 millions in 1911 (as compared with Germany's 40 millions in 1871 and 70 millions in 1914). France's coal production between 1870 and 1910 increased less than 200 per cent (as compared with 600 per cent for Germany). During the same time her production in pig iron increased only from 1.2 million tons to 4 million tons. On the face of things, therefore, while France is a rich country in the sense of being economically self-sustaining, she is not rich in the rapid production of industrial surplus.

In view of this handicap France's expenditures during the past few years have increased with alarming rapidity. Take her taxes, for example. In 1913, they amounted to 5 billions of francs, in 1919 to 11.6 billions, and in 1923 to 23.4 billions.

The French budget adopted July 1, 1923, tells the story.

Under the French financial system there is a general budget and a special budget. The general budget for 1923 provides for an expenditure of 23.4 billion francs, of which a little more than half is for "debt service." The receipts from taxes meet these expenditures and allow a tiny surplus.

Then comes a special budget. The reports of the United States Department of Commerce show that "the total expenditures for which the French Government is responsible have aggregated about 50 billion francs annually for the past few years." Under the "special budget" there are the costs of reestablishing life in the devastated areas, the costs of pensions, and the like. Many of these costs are being charged to the account of Germany. But during the present year, unless Germany should pay an unexpected amount, the deficit on the French budget will equal more than 20 billions of francs. In other words, the French Government will be spending more than 2 francs for every one that it receives through the normal channels of taxation.

The chief burden on the French budget is the French debt. To be sure this debt consists of nothing more than promises to pay, but let it be once repudiated and the heart is cut out of European imperialism. The French debt at the present moment is approximately 430 billion francs. This amount is made up as follows:

|                      |     |                |
|----------------------|-----|----------------|
| Pre-war debt         | 25  | billion francs |
| War loans            | 120 | " "            |
| Short-term notes     | 114 | " "            |
| Owing Bank of France | 24  | " "            |
| Foreign debt         | 124 | " "            |
| Miscellaneous        | 23  | " "            |
| Total                | 430 | " "            |

At the moment France is not paying interest on the \$3,340,000,000 which she owes the United States and is pursuing a similar course with England. This interest, however, has not been "defaulted." It has merely been "funded"—that is, added to the principal of the debt. If France were to pay 5 per cent on all of her present obligations, it would absorb more than nine-tenths of her annual income.

What more need be said? The French have established a great empire without having at home an economic organization capable of producing the necessary surplus wealth for financing an empire. What then is to be done? If France does not produce, she must borrow or steal. France has engaged in the gigantic game of international plunder, emerging from the war of 1914 with Alsace-Lorraine, the Saar, and important concessions in Africa. But international robbery costs money, and the French find that their total available income covers less than 50 per cent of the necessary annual outlay.

Perhaps the matter can be best stated in a series of questions:

1. *Can France demoralize the economic life of her great rival, Germany?*

The treaty did that and France is now completing the work by occupying the Ruhr.

2. *Can she become an industrial nation, taking Germany's place in Central Europe?*

Probably not. Certainly not for some time to come.

3. *How then can she retain her cherished position as first power of Europe?*

Only by robbery (exploitation and imperialism).



4. *Can she carry on this robbery successfully?*

Only by paying her debts.

5. *Can she pay her debts?*

Not unless Germany pays for the war.

6. *Can Germany pay for the war?*

No, because French policy has already crippled German economic, commercial, and financial life.

The Nationalist Party in France has embarked on a venture that is not only economically unsound, but that will destroy what is left of European imperialism as it is now undermining imperial France.

The French statesmen were forced to choose between a ruined Germany and a paying Germany. They chose to ruin Germany and by that decision joined hands with Soviet Russia to crush European imperialism.

## In the Driftway

IT is not enough that American collectors make way with English objects of art and first editions of all exclusively English authors. That, in the course of ordinary living, might be forgiven, for after all man does not live by first editions alone. The latest English grievance is much more real: the supply of six-foot footmen is almost exhausted, and the Americans are to blame. Recently a royal household advertised for footmen of the proper size and not only were there none to be had, but a miscreant measuring only five feet seven inches actually applied for the job. The royal households could talk of nothing else for nearly a week: it is, of course, well known that rich Americans will have nothing but six-foot footmen; and it is equally well known that there are thousands, nay, probably millions of rich Americans. Why were the American colonies ever given their independence!

\* \* \* \* \*

EVIDENTLY in this state of affairs lies cause for serious international complications. Even the Drifter can see that the comity of nations depends on things not much more momentous than this. But there are grounds for comfort both for Americans and English; "the canned-fruit kings and peanut-paladins of Hoochland," to quote the *London Daily Herald*, are not alone to blame. It seems that not all men suitable for footmen embrace that occupation, either in England or the United States; many of them go into the movies, as actors—who has not thrilled to see them?—or as the uniformed attendants outside the moving-picture theaters, equally thrilling and more colorful. War between the nations may yet be averted. And yet the Drifter is not satisfied. He deplores the lack of six-foot footmen just as he deplores the fact that the pageantry of life in general is disappearing. In modern civilization there are too many white porcelain bath-tubs and too few footmen in red and gold. The Russian Soviet Government, though it has achieved a sort of communism and aspires to more, has recognized this great truth. It dispensed with the trappings of royalty and the gilded ornaments of the church, but recently an infant was formally dedicated to communism with as much ceremony as is required to christen a prince. The parents were reported to have been pale and trembling with the solemnity of the occasion; the great audience witnessing the event sang the International fervently and religiously and tears were shed.

IT is this tear-compelling aspect of ceremony that will make it essential in any future communist state. The king may be set to peeling potatoes, and the royal heir, divested of his ermine, may try his hand at mopping floors, but something must be provided for their erstwhile subjects to weep over in unison. The red flag will do, possibly, or the martyrs who shall have given their lives for the revolution. And yet, if the Drifter should be around to observe and give advice—which, considering his advanced age, is extremely unlikely—he will suggest, as an indispensable addition to the entertainment, a striped flagpole, or a martyr's crown, or a six-foot gentleman in gold knickerbockers who had once been a footman.

THE DRIFTER

## Correspondence

[Letters to the Editor should ordinarily not exceed 500 words, and shorter communications are more likely to be printed. In any case the Editor reserves the right to abridge communications.]

### Two Cooperative Protests

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: For once, Mr. Editor, you really are mistaken when you say in your editorial of October 24: "In the last three years only one building has been completed with apartments to let for as little as \$10 per room per month—and that by a philanthropic organization." You refer to New York City, where the State housing commission has been investigating emergency rent legislation. Do you not?

But there are groups of citizens who have supplied themselves with homes to live in, apartments which cost them on an average less than \$10 a month per room, even here in New York City, where the housing situation is most acute. But these are not profit-making enterprises; that's the point. They are cooperative.

There are twenty-five cooperative apartments in South Brooklyn—three erected within the last year—housing from sixteen to thirty-two families each. The purchasing of land, the erection of the buildings, the securing of funds, the administration of the enterprises from start to finish have been carried on by the home-makers themselves. No speculative real-estate corporation has promoted these projects, to turn over when completed at an inflated valuation to credulous tenants. In the apartments to which I refer the risks as well as the savings have all been assumed by the cooperators themselves.

However, this is not the case in the present housing investigation where practically all the testimony has been sought from those who build to sell or rent for profit. Of course they testify that no apartments can rent for less than \$10 a room per month today, because they represent the system of housing in which profit must be collected all along the line—by the land speculator, the loaning agency, the building contractor, the real-estate promoter—all demanding their toll.

This is the reason why cooperators, even in this crisis, can build four- to six-room apartments, whose operating charges (rents) amount to from \$35 to \$65 a month, per apartment, according to location. This is also the reason why, as their loans or mortgages are paid off, these monthly charges regularly decrease.

How is it that these facts are not more generally known? I believe it is because the American public unquestionably accepts private profit as the motive behind all economic enterprises. Such facts should be reassuring to *Nation* readers. It is good to know that there are groups of self-reliant citizens who are solving their housing problems; who form and finance their own building associations; and who supply themselves with attrac-



tive homes, free from philanthropy, free from graft, and free from profiteering landlordism.

New York, November 1

AGNES D. WARBASSE

#### TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: I have been reading Victor H. Lawn's article, *The Kennels of New York*, in the number for December 19. The pictures he sketches of bad housing conditions are well done, but we have seen them many, many times; and most of us have experienced more inconveniences than we care to boast about. So I, for one, skipped very hurriedly over these descriptions and over the stories of the iniquities of the bankers, another familiar tale, to find the remedy. The heavens shriek for a remedy these days. And what did I find?

Municipal housing! To save us from the extortions of the landlords he would give us a glorified landlord in Tammany Hall! Can there still be folks in New York, writer-folks, who do not know of the munificent graft game played upon all of us, tenants and landlords alike, by the agents, inspectors, and whatnots of city pay rolls already?

There is a definite cure for the housing evil: cooperative housing. The Consumers Cooperative Housing Association of 70 Fifth Avenue is one effort toward housing for the workers without a penny of private profit for the promoters; and there are others. The possible retort that cooperative housing has not yet been tried on a large enough scale to demonstrate its feasibility is beside the point. How far has municipal housing been carried in this city, either? We can, however, go to those who have studied both kinds of housing in Europe where each has been tried extensively and ask for their judgment of the merits of the two programs, which is cheaper, which enlists the greater interest on the part of the tenants, which insures the best care of the property. Those of us who are political-minded and want some kind of a powerful institution to do things for us will perhaps turn to municipal housing. Those with initiative who prefer to face and solve their own problems independent of bureaucrats and politicians will turn to cooperative housing.

New York, December 14

CEDRIC LONG

## The Fruits of Revolution

#### TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: As a recent traveler in Soviet Russia and a recent purchaser of the shares of stock recommended by President Hillman of the Russian-American Industrial Corporation, I am prompted to supplement his report printed in your issue of November 7 announcing the first dividend declared by that very interesting organization.

The Russian Clothing Syndicate is all that Mr. Hillman says it is, and more. It is, as one of my Quaker friends remarked after visiting several of the factories, a "syndicate with a soul—if such a thing is possible." It follows the usual processes of trade in providing itself with raw material and disposing of its product, but in its twenty-five productive units—factories employing some 15,000 workers—it appears that the worker has a voice and finds interesting avenues of expression that have not been opened for the workers in any other land. Something of both the depth and the gaiety of the workers' life is suggested in Magdeleine Marx's story of the Russian women in that excellent Russian number of *The Nation*.

The fact that all these workers who now enjoy these very tangible and, I believe, tasty fruits of revolution lived only seven years ago in virtual industrial servitude makes the present life, hard though it may be at times, in these Russian shops the more intensely dramatic by contrast. I remember how in one clothing factory I found the headquarters of the *kult komissia* (Culture Committee) flooded one noon hour with workers inquiring of this omniscient committee about a dozen phases of the intellectual and social work of the plant. To sit in that small room and watch the eager faces coming, questioning, go-

ing, and then to think of the cold and cynical exploitation of these same workers before 1917, was to sense in a single moment, in a single scene, the change wrought in these six years.

Of course "industrial credits to Russia" through RAIC or any other corporation created for this purpose make possible just so much more breadth of life and experimentation in these Russian factories. I can think of no industries, here or abroad, where I would sooner invest a ten dollar bill or two. I know of no groups of workers anywhere who have the chance and are at the same time capable of doing so much for themselves and for the world on so little capital. Americans who have more than a platonic sympathy for Soviet Russia's great people and her social laboratory can do no better than take Mr. Hillman's practical hint and help the Russians to help themselves. For everything that he predicted a year ago has apparently come true and the picture that Mary Heaton Vorse painted in your columns of the Amalgamated's enterprise in Russia seems to have materialized. Once more the Russian realists have delivered the goods.

New York, November 12

SYDOR H. WALKER

## Both Sides

#### TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: In Mr. Marvin Lowenthal's article on Anti-Semitism in European Universities, in your issue of November 14, I found the following phrase: "The Rumanian students demanded, with usual rioting, that the Jews be excluded from the college unless the Jewish community furnished corpses for dissection." The facts are different; 70 per cent of the medical students at the university in question are Jews, and there was not one Jewish corpse for dissection, the argument being that the Jewish belief forbids the dissecting of the dead (as if our Christian religion allows it). Then the conflict started.

I think we ought to see the question from both sides.

Cleveland, November 20

GEORGE ANAGNOSTACHE

#### TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Since a practical dearth of Jewish corpses exists in the dissection rooms of the universities throughout the world and has so existed since dissection was first practiced, it is curious that only today and in Eastern Europe this dearth has become a subject of violent conflict and bloody encounter. Have Rumanian physicians recently discovered a difference between Jewish and Christian physiology? Is therefore the taboo of the Jewish religion against dissection, hitherto respected by all civilized medical schools, an obstacle to science? Unless this is so, I hardly think that the conflict really "started" in the fashion Mr. Anagnostache suggests. I suspect that the attitude of mind which registers excitement, indignation, and a sense of unfairness over the religion of a corpse is at bottom responsible; and the origin of this attitude lies in the social and political conditions I touched on in my article.

New York, December 23

MARVIN LOWENTHAL

## Growing Poets

#### TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Your interesting editorial on resident poets in our colleges and universities in the issue of November 21 discusses the transporting and transplanting of such poets but makes no mention of a system we have found so satisfactory that we should like to recommend it to others—that is producing them yourself. Grace Hazard Conkling is a graduate of Smith College and is now an associate professor in its department of English, giving courses in Browning, in contemporary poetry, and in versification, sometimes referred to as the Poetry Workshop.

SMITH COLLEGE PRESS BOARD

Northampton, Massachusetts, November 17

## Books

### Aids to Psychological Thinking

*Readings in General Psychology.* By Edward S. Robinson and Florence Richardson Robinson. The University of Chicago Press. \$4.50.

*General Psychology.* By Walter S. Hunter. The University of Chicago Press. \$2.

*Intelligence Testing.* By Rudolf Pintner. Henry Holt and Company. \$2.50.

*Human Character.* By Hugh Elliot. Longmans, Green and Company. \$2.50.

THE rapid spread of psychological modes of thinking, for the student as pedagogical discipline, for the layman in application to current interests, requires guiding appliances: texts, readings, special manuals, surveys of interesting sections and cross-sections of the extensive mental domain. The examples here assembled are typical alike of interests and contributions. Mr. and Mrs. Robinson have compiled the first source-book in general psychology—"general" as excluding the special fields and addressed to broad aspects of mental functions. What the problems of psychology are and how they are to be formulated; the nervous system and its modes of behavior; reflex action, instinct, habit; the range of sensations; the supporting processes of attention, perception, personality; dreams, language, individual differences: such are the materials of this volume. Its purpose is to provide concise and authoritative—at times suggestive—statements that will orient the general reader and the student seeker for information in the several topics.

To maintain proportion in such an enterprise requires experienced judgment. The task is handicapped in this case by the nature of the available selections, for the most part prepared for unrelated purposes, varying in scale, in point of view, in emphasis; compromise is inevitable. My chief criticism of the volume is the too generous inclusion of abstracts from articles of but temporary or controversial bearing; these have the further disadvantage that they emphasize points of limited interest, and fail to furnish the larger outlines which form the standard need of the standard reader. Considering the shifting state of opinion in many of the problems and issues in contemporary psychology, much of this is inevitable; a source-book, however, aims at a moderate longevity.

Mr. Hunter's "General Psychology," presented in a revised version, is "general" in another sense; it includes the fields of animal, applied, abnormal, and social psychology, as well as the traditional survey of the mental processes typical of normal, adult, human mentality. That such surveys meet a need is indicated by their ready acceptance. The present text is based on a teaching plan open to criticism; if absorbed or dispensed in the printed order, confusion is likely; for to plunge the novice into the intricacies of animal behavior technique, abnormal complexities, social involutions and evolutions, and later supply the knowledge and concepts needed for their digestion, invites a false reaction, if not a blank one.

Few topics in recent psychology have received larger publicity than intelligence-testing. Mr. Pintner's book combines with an account of the methods of conducting tests—the chief emphasis of most handbooks—a well-executed historical statement and a more concise and discerning summary of the results issuing from this mass of testing than is elsewhere available. What the tests tell of the status of the feeble-minded and the superior, of the child at school and the student at college, of the delinquent and dependent, of the deaf and blind, of the Negro and the foreign-born, of the soldier, the employee in general, is itself told in tables and conclusions, often tentative and with gaps at vital points, yet with sufficient positive results to make it abundantly clear that testing, though a crude instrument,

has justified the labor spent upon it and even excuses much of the misspent energy.

The value of such a survey depends upon the critical ability of the author. Mr. Pintner holds himself rigidly—perhaps too rigidly—to the objective role of interpreter of the findings. His ventures into broader conclusions and suggestions are few and reserved. A consistent and conservative attitude permeates the volume and gives confidence to the points selected for emphasis. On such general issues as the parts played by heredity and by environment, on the distinction between knowledge and mental alertness, on the issue of general and special ability, on the nature of an aptitude and the mode of its application, the positions taken are sound and helpful. The volume aims directly to place before the serious reader the essential contributions to the intelligence function that have thus far emerged from the ingenuity and labor expended upon testing; it accomplishes its purpose by an adjustment of critical and practical considerations.

As the consequence of a definite shift of interest, psychologists have settled down to a workable definition of their science as that dealing with human behavior and human nature; of the clue-words significant of the latter, "character" is the most engaging, while "temperament" may be the most basic. Disquisitions on character range from orderly gossip to erudite confusion. Despite its dragnet inclinations, the term has an accredited status in psychology, though the tolerant psychologist is not disturbed, and may be helped, by its more popular and "literary" affiliations. Mr. Hugh Elliot considers it from the non-professional approach, making "Shakespeare the greatest psychologist the world has ever known." He has, indeed, a cavalier attitude toward the dyed-in-the-wool psychologists that is out of keeping with the evident and discerning use he has made of their contributions. Discursive, eclectic, unconventional, the chapters tend to take the form of sketchy essays. The psychologist, scanning the volume too casually, would be tempted to put it aside; the loss would be his own, as Mr. Elliot happens to have the gift of psychologizing. Indeed, the book is full of keen observation and shrewd analysis, which, though often skin-deep, penetrates far enough and is distinctly stimulating.

Everywhere trends of thought and activity are seeking the stimulus of a psychological interpretation. Psychologists have invited the responsibility of guidance by accepting the pragmatic implications of their science; it behooves them to maintain a free development of the problems which their best judgment holds to be significant and profitable.

JOSEPH JASTROW

### Building Lots

*Weeds.* By Pio Baroja. Translated by Isaac Goldberg. Alfred A. Knopf. \$2.50.

IT'S curious rereading after seven years—this trilogy of Baroja's of which "Weeds" is the central novel. Then I was a newcomer in a Madrid that had been unchanged for two or three decades, the Madrid of Galdós and the Cafe Suizo; the war was in its less horrible slaughterhouse stage; the first thing you did every morning was still to look out of the window to see if the great revolution had burst with the dawn; now Madrid is an Americanized town with its subway and its skyscrapers at Cuatro Caminos; soccer is taking the place of bullfights, and at last Spain is being sucked into the current of industrial life. The Pyrenees are leveled.

"La Lucha por la Vida" is the epic of a period in Spanish life, a not at all despicable period, of which the close was symbolized by Primo Rivera's coup d'état last summer. Then, in 1916, the three novels still seemed actual, fresh off the presses as a bulldog edition; roaming through the clattering Madrid streets with "Weeds" in one pocket and M. Garnier's dictionary in the other, you seemed to have the keys to every alley and wine-shop, to the iron-bound doors that opened on the breakneck stairs, with their invariable smell of scorched olive oil, of all the tenement



houses, to every courtyard and rag market. These books led you through all the back lots and bad lands and cabbage patches that filled the valleys round the city, through suburbs like Kalir kranls out along the old royal roads where great painted carts drawn by four mules tandem navigated creakily like galleons, over the bare hills of the Castilian desert with the Sierra always bright and gleaming in your face. They were the true Baedeker to that seething maze of rebellious, unkempt, louse-bitten, soaring life that was Madrid, the clotted center and heart of the peninsula. Under the thin veneer of a nineteenth-century city the old Adam was still rampant. Everything was leading to the great revolution that was to be the old Adam's victory and transfiguration. The angels and demons were spoiling for Armageddon.

Now we have seen Armageddon, the marvelous year has been laid away among the other years in the smoothing presses of history. The old Adam wears Arrow collars and Walkover shoes and the machine he was to make his own is in the hands of Henry Ford and Mussolini and other less personable marionettes. From being the actual tidings from a picket on guard "La Lucha por la Vida" has become a document and a work of art.

In spite of an unimaginative and frequently incorrect translation, "Weeds" and "The Quest," the two novels already published in English, are worthy, I think, of being set a little apart from the flood of translations out of all languages annually dumped into the receptive but expressionless maw of the American public. They are a genuine and non-literary account of an almost extinguished flare of revolt against the great machine. These humble people, Manuel, Jesus, La Justa, the Baroness, fitfully and helplessly as they stray along their appointed paths, are none of them mob minded; the old Adam glows in them at times; they are unwillingly driven to the treadmill. Their children, the inhabitants of the new white stone Madrid that has sprouted in five years, go consentingly. Business and sport, industry and prosperity are undisputed gods. The lazy, knotty-minded inhabitants of this old Madrid, contentious and noisy and fond of laughing, have disappeared like the goats that used to browse in the back lots full of shacks and beggars and little drinking dens where now straight fences of barbed wire mark off the limits of the Garden City. As a record these books are immensely valuable, and perhaps there is more than that to them. There is a dignity and restraint in the writing, a quietly distilled poetic energy that is very hard to describe. Baroja is a great novelist, not only in his time, on railway bookstalls and in editorial offices, but in that vigorous emanation of life and events that for some reason people garner up and desiccate in libraries and call literature. That's all there is to it.

JOHN DOS PASSOS

## Expressionism in Art Psychoanalyzed

*Expressionism in Art; its Psychological and Biological Basis.*

By Oscar Pfister. E. P. Dutton and Company. \$3.

**P**FISTER confines his study of expressionism to those abnormal products of the modern art movements which have aroused such scorn and derision, and which exhibit a revolutionary spirit akin to the bolshevist spirit. This art, he says, is the picturing of "subjective presentation, accompanied by total or almost total distortion of nature . . . or by suppression of all external reality." Picasso, Matisse, Picabia, the Cubists, Futurists, Vorticists, and Dadaists may differ from each other in their forms of expression, but the common characteristic of their art is the "psychical discharge." What, he asks, is the psychological and biological background of this expressionism, and what is the relation between it and art in the normal sense?

Pfister was led to deal with this subject by the method of psychoanalysis through a patient, a French artist of high accomplishment, whom the war had wrecked nervously, and who came

to him for treatment. In the course of his treatment, Pfister obtained from his patient a series of drawings (reproduced in this book) of either a meaningless or a repulsive character. On analysis these drawings yielded much material for a "history" which referred the artist's misanthropy, cruelty, and abnormal outlook on life to inhibitions having their sources in experiences in childhood. Pfister found that the artist was not interested in making himself intellectually understood by means of these drawings, but that he was attempting to satisfy individual instincts, such as thirst for vengeance, sadistic and masochistic desires, the ambition to rule, the expression of wish fulfillments. He found further that the act of objectivation gave the artist relief from his emotional sufferings, and that he hoped to attract by its means a kindred soul who would understand and sympathize with him. Finally, the work was looked upon by the artist as an attempt to realize a universe in which he could maintain and assert himself with freedom.

It was natural that the subject should interest the psychoanalyst, for the products of expressionism, while they are seemingly "disparate" in the scientific as well as the Goyan sense, are the works of men highly gifted as artists, who have deliberately chosen this somewhat incoherent method of articulation. Here are either the symptoms of a disease or the revelations of a new orientation, and Pfister feels that both conclusions are warranted. Expressionism attempts to reproduce the essential meaning of things. The painter's art presents his psychic state. An artist is more or less a man of suffering, for no genius is without inhibitions. His reaction to the world of reality is affected by his suffering, which has thrown him back on himself to the degree that he is become an introvert, inducing in him a paranoiac megalomania which compels him to devalue and even to violate nature in his representations. Repelled from the external world through bitter experiences, he magnifies himself to the power of a world creator. This immense self-conceit is not vanity, but a necessary means of escape from the collapse of the lonely personality denuded of all reality. He paints from an inner necessity to relieve himself from his soul's distress and to satisfy his instincts. Often he does not know what he is painting, for he is trying to fulfil desires which are seething in his unconscious, and also to relate himself to reality. Only those can understand him who possess the psychical constitution corresponding with that of the expressionist, and whose unconscious speaks the same language as the artist's unconscious.

If we ask what brought this "new art" into existence, Pfister replies that it is the natural precipitation of sufferings brought on by the injustice and selfishness of our materialistic civilization. The artist has realized the impossibility of going further in this direction, and, more prophetic than the statesman, is anticipating the final judgment on our civilization of Mammon. All art, declares Pfister, has its origin in the failure of reality to satisfy man's needs. It is the outcome of suffering. Wagner could not understand how a perfectly happy man could ever be an artist. Sufferings are the results of inhibitions preventing the life-impulse from realizing a conscious relation with reality. They throw the sufferer back on himself, producing the neuroses which afflict so many, and compelling the creation of other worlds in which relief from his sufferings may be found. The expressionist is thus trying to find ways by which he may overcome the poverty of his ordinary life. Unhappily, his ways are illusory because he has cut himself off from real life. His art suffers in consequence. He is in no relation to art, if he cannot give to his own sufferings the larger significance of universal suffering, and so long as he is unable to anticipate either perceptually or symbolically a universally valid method by which this suffering can be overcome. If his work is merely his "psychical discharge," he must be unintelligible. At present the expressionist has not come to grips with life; his egotism has withdrawn him from the world. When he joins issue with it he is an anarchist, as, when he forsakes it, he becomes demented. He must free himself first, or he will never be able to



deliver others. However, there is a future for him. His breach with tradition, his powerful assertion of the validity of his inner compulsions, his daring demands for the satisfaction of his individual necessities will compel a fresh expression and bring about a new painting, a new sculpture, a new poetry which will deal with reality in a prophetic spirit and conquer it for man's enjoyment.

Pfister set out to give us the details of an interesting medical case; he finished by giving an exposition of art which is of far greater interest.

TEMPLE SCOTT

## Thomas Hardy's Tristram

*The Famous Tragedy of the Queen of Cornwall at Tintagel in Lyonesse. A New Version of an Old Story. Arranged as a Play for Mimmers. In One Act. Requiring no Theatre or Scenery.* By Thomas Hardy. The Macmillan Company. \$3.50.

IT is altogether characteristic of Mr. Hardy that he should have settled upon the Tristram legend because it was a local one. The man whose mind for sixty years or more has searched the soil of Wessex as the roots of an ancient yew tree thread the ground had only to look a little further west to find the setting of an imperishable story. Mr. Hardy does not say how long it is since he first visited the rocky headlands of Tintagel, but judging by the dedication here, to "those with whom I formerly spent many hours at the scene of the tradition," it must be many years—perhaps as many as were required, on another portion of the English coast, to convince him that he wanted to treat the legend of Napoleon's invasion. The result in the latter case was "The Dynasts." "The Famous Tragedy" is by comparison a very slight poem, but it is distinguished by beauty and intensity, and the volume in which it now appears would be worth having if only for the two drawings by the author that are reproduced—one an "imaginary view of Tintagel Castle at the time of the tragedy," reconstructing from the ruins now there the bleak Saxon walls and towers rising above the bleak sea, and the other an "imaginary aspect of the Great Hall at the time of the tragedy," with a wide arch at the further end "through which the Atlantic is visible across an outer ward and over the ramparts of the stronghold."

Either by choice or from the exigencies of his form, Mr. Hardy has compressed his action within the walls of a single room and within the limits of less than an hour's time; he has selected a moment at the end of his story when it was possible, after reviewing the long past of Tristram and Iseult, to bring their lives suddenly to catastrophe. King Mark, here a vicious and treacherous cuckold, has prematurely returned from the hunt in the hope of surprising his queen with Tristram. He finds her alone, but it is disclosed that during his absence she voyaged to Brittany, was met at the shore by Iseult the White Handed with false news of Tristram's death, and only now has made her sorrowful way back to Cornwall:

"And the seas sloped like house roofs all the way."

While the King feasts in an adjoining hall, Tristram comes, disguised as an old minstrel, having sped from Brittany at the moment he heard that Iseult had been there. The lovers have hardly more than greeted each other when another sail is sighted on the sea and Iseult the White Handed, closely pursuing Tristram, arrives to plead for his return. At sight of the first Iseult she faints and is carried off. King Mark enters behind Tristram and stabs him; Iseult stabs Mark and runs to throw herself into the sea; Iseult the White Handed is left alone to mourn.

The story is thus reduced almost to its bones, but it is not bare. Behind these hoarse and halting verses there is true harmony, and beneath this wintry exterior there is passion. "The Famous Tragedy," like all of Hardy's poems, sticks in the mind; less fluent than Swinburne's version, or Arnold's, it is equally authentic, and its concentration is perfectly in the temper of its time.

MARK VAN DOREN

## Zion's Best Seller

*The New Testament. An American Translation.* By Edgar J. Goodspeed. University of Chicago Press. \$3.

*The Riverside New Testament.* Translated by William G. Ballantine. Houghton Mifflin Company. \$3.

*The Acts of the Apostles.* Introduction and commentary by A. W. F. Blunt. Oxford University Press. \$1.50.

THIS season there is almost a plethora of "popular yet scientific" studies of Jesus and translations of the Gospels. Perhaps we are experiencing another of those heavily press-agented religious revivals—this time, however, one manifesting itself not in spook-chasing or Larger Life living, but in more or less wholesome curiosity as to the life and teaching of that young Jew who was crucified on Golgotha. Or perhaps the appearance of these new studies and versions so close upon each other's heels is but a coincidence. Certainly this great demand the translators have discovered for a New Testament in modern language and format is not a new and unprecedented thing; Wyclif must have sensed it already several centuries ago. People have always cried for a presentation of the Holy Writ that might show it to be the incomparably beautiful, transcendently illumined, and inevitably commanding document that tradition has made it out to be.

Both Mr. Goodspeed and Mr. Ballantine have tried valiantly to answer that cry, and if they have failed, it is only to the degree that all men must fail when they essay the almost impossible. The greatness, the utterly peerless majesty, of the Scriptures has become with most of us too exaggerated a legend ever to be quite validated by reality. So it is highly doubtful whether these new versions, despite the contemporaneity of their language and the attractiveness of their bookmaking, will do much to stimulate the sluggish recourse of this perverse generation to the Gospels. To be sure, a rippling breeze of enthusiasm may sweep through the women's clubs, and many good souls who always looked on the New Testament as a gray old thing to be shunned as one shuns a blue-nosed bore, will now discover it to be an amazingly quick and moving document, occasionally dull, often repetitious, but most of the time as "compelling" as any contemporary novel. But one must be a sanguine soul indeed to look for more.

That, however, does not alter the quality of either Mr. Goodspeed's or Mr. Ballantine's efforts. Both have produced admirable translations that are certain to intrigue even if they will not overwhelm those who regard the New Testament as holy but unreadable. Of the two, probably Mr. Goodspeed's version will be the more popular, not merely because it has been far better advertised, but also because it is the more daring in its modernisms. In it the penny of the King James Version and the shilling of Mr. Ballantine's translation rise in value and become a whole dollar—which is rather like calling a spade a steam-shovel. Galatians, 5:7, "Ye did run well" according to the Authorized version, is translated "You were running finely" in the Riverside, and "You were making such progress!" in the Chicago publication. In like order, the "Holy Ghost" becomes the "Holy Spirit," and finally the "holy Spirit." It is characteristic that Mr. Ballantine should relapse again and again into the pleasant "thee-thou" of the mellower translations, and that Mr. Goodspeed should very rigorously adhere to our modern "you." But both in like measure commit the egregious error of retranslating the Lord's Prayer, and with an awkwardness well-nigh unforgivable. Save for this, however, both translators show exemplary taste and intelligence in their renditions. If either of them should, under the auspices of the Society of Gideons, do for the Old Testament what he has already done for the New, it is possible that the ubiquitous hotel-room Bible might henceforth be used for more than a paper-weight.

Mr. Blunt's little volume on Acts is part of the already familiar Clarendon Bible, edited by the Bishops of Newcastle and

Ripon; and its virtues and faults are very much those of the other volumes in the series. The editors are "conscious of a growing demand" for a new presentation of the Scriptures—not a new translation, but a new interpretation. Accordingly they present this series of studies in which the notes and comments are based on free critical investigation—with reservations. It is characteristic of most Christian scholars that these reservations become more pronounced when they deal with the New Testament, and the author of this study of Acts is no exception. He swallows the miracles almost without a grimace, assuring the reader that the author of Acts is a "serious historian who . . . used his sources with honesty and judgment," and is therefore presumed to be deserving of credence! People with a thirst for Scriptural understanding but without the stamina to take it "straight" will be amply pleased with Mr. Blunt's work. It is well and copiously illustrated, intelligible in its presentation, and excellently put together.

LEWIS BROWNE

## The Book of Judith

*The Sun Field.* By Heywood Broun. G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$2.

HEYWOOD BROUN is too good a columnist to be a successful novelist: the column is his destined medium of expression, not merely a form in which he has done much work. In the column he functions as naturally as Paul Morphy functioned over the chess board; his novels are studied attempts. Without ever losing the virtues that make his column delightful, he fails to transform himself into a novelist.

Six days in the week it is Heywood Broun's business to express his opinions, to project his own personality: affirmations and dissent are his means of life and the breath of it. For him observation without comment is impossible. And the comment must always be edged or softened by humor. Life does not furnish him with material for literary creation so much as with subjects for argument. He has no time to climb above the conflict, he must forever be doing genial battle. He encounters new books, birth control, censorship, patriotism, girl scouts—and each encounter results in the formation of opinion. These opinions take shape quickly: they are subject to equally quick revision. So Heywood Broun comes to the novel with habits of mind that are not those of the true novelist. He is not concerned with creation for its own sake: character interests him only in so far as it offers him spokesmen or opponents, or butts for his playful humor; plot interests him only in so far as it furnishes situations for the illustration of his opinions and the exercise of his humor; description interests him scarcely at all but for its humorous possibilities; and dialogue, when it is not at the service of belief or doubt, serves too as the vehicle of fun. The traditional Four Elements of the novel are thus used by Broun in precisely the way in which we should expect a columnist to use them; and something less than a novel (in the best senses of that vague word) results.

But what does result is exceedingly entertaining; and having denied "The Sun Field" the title of novel, I am ready to state that I enjoyed it thoroughly. The enjoyment was similar to that furnished by Broun's best columns, with something added. For this additional something, one character is almost wholly responsible. Judith justifies Heywood Broun's second excursion into fiction: she is priceless.

Judith is the dauntlessly determined, intellectual, emancipated woman whose every reaction is in impeccable accord with the latest cant of the anti-canters; she is an intolerant champion of personal liberty, a self-expressor, and a Lucy Stoner. She was one of the earliest users of the phrase "inferiority complex," and she was one of the first to discover the knack of liking the wrong things for the right reasons. Beautiful and profane, she is brutal in the utterance of her convictions; and she was born to be a passionate victim of the latest hokum. A suffragist before the war, she joined the Y.W.C.A. during

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## The Twilight of Democracy?

Several European countries have lately set up dictatorships: Germany, Italy, Russia, Spain.

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the scrimmage, and became a practicing pacifist the day following the armistice. After issuing a counter-blast to Wilson's Fourteen Points, she took up Sherwood Anderson. "She said that he was the only man in America who brought authentic passion into fiction." And—this being the situation on which the comedy of "The Sun Field" rests—she married Tiny Tyler, home-run king of the American League. In aesthetic moments she explained this action by saying that the line of his arm and shoulder when he threw to home was finer than any thing in Greek sculpture; while in less aesthetic mood she made it clear that, having failed to persuade him to seduce her, she married him for "lust." (Just the word Judith would use with gusto.)

Whatever her reasons, and her honesty seems patent, her marriage furnishes Broun with material for decidedly amusing comedy. Synopsis would be superfluous here, and it is even unnecessary to consider the character of Tiny, since he exists as the absolute antithesis of Judith; but it may be mentioned that the "big scene" is that in which Judith refuses to be respected or to be a good influence to any man, whereat Tyler screams hysterically: "Don't ride me any more. I'll do what I want. I will respect you. You're not like the rest. God damn you! I do respect you."

On the jacket of this book the publishers have murmured something about its being "a novel of modern marriage and some of its problems." It is scarcely that. Whatever generalizations regarding marriage it may contain, and there are many, the case presented is too obviously selected and framed with comic intent to serve as support for them. "The Sun Field" is the book of Judith. It has been considered a *roman à clef*; but in the case of the heroine, at least, it would be a waste of time to attempt identification: there are so many Judiths about, however much each one may think herself unique.

BEN RAY REDMAN

## Books in Brief

*Horatio's Story.* By Gordon King. Boni and Liveright. \$2.

Here is a smooth and tranquil novel, done with an easy and competent grasp of its materials, and suggesting that the author—when he gets hold of a story which will kindle his talent into a brighter flame—may do work of considerable value. As it stands, "Horatio's Story" has about it too much of the academic lumber which makes good scaffolding, but needs to be cleared away when the structure is complete. This is a metaphoric hint to the effect that the book is occasionally dull.

*The Cheerful Giver.* By Samuel McChord Crothers. Houghton Mifflin Company. \$2.

Dr. Crothers still stands with reluctant feet where the Victorian and the modern meet, valiantly trying to inveigle the modern into Victorian reticences. The fact that he has not succeeded has not disheartened him; he continues to pour the oil of his urbanity upon the waves of an incomprehensible discontent. The things which chiefly delight him are indicated by the titles of certain of his most recent essays—"The Literary Tastes of My Great-Grandmother," "History for the Ageing," "The Leisureable Hours of John Wesley."

*The Wallet of Kai Lung.* By Ernest Bramah. George H. Doran Company. \$2.50.

The measure of one's delight in such a narrative as this is on the basis of one's fondness for humor which is deliberate, satire which is philosophic, and action which is aloof. There is a great deal of color in this story—and an equal apportionment of Oriental calm. If these elements coincide with one's temperament, Ernest Bramah will be quite to the taste; otherwise he is inclined to be insidiously soporific.

*Tut, Tut! Mr. Tutt.* By Arthur Train. Charles Scribner's Sons. \$2.

Mr. Train, himself a practicing attorney in the Court of General Sessions and elsewhere, has invented as a sort of alter

ego a quizzical old lawyer, Mr. Tutt, who is out to see justice done and who is convinced of the ultimate triumph of honesty and good intention over the crooked and greedy.

*The Soul of the City. An Urban Anthology.* Compiled by Garland Greever and Joseph M. Bachelor. Houghton Mifflin Company. \$1.75.

"When a man is tired of London," said Dr. Johnson, "he is tired of life." The compilers of this excellent anthology, fortified not only by Dr. Johnson but by the fact that everybody today is going to town to stay, have endeavored to collect the best verse in English which cities have inspired, in the hope of vindicating the unpastoral. The endeavor is significant as emphasizing the trend in contemporary literature away from country sentiment, but it is too bad that there is so much city sentiment here—so much Charles Hanson Towne, for instance—and so little of the wit which cities alone can generate. In the poetry of the age of Anne there was a mine of material from which to select—there was Gay's *Trivia*, the best of all poems on streets—but only Pope's *City Mouse* and *Country Mouse* is given. Yet no anthology is complete, and this one does what all good ones do: it stimulates the reader to complete it for himself.

## Drama Christmas Rush

IN the week between Christmas Day and New Year's Day there were fourteen new offerings in the New York theaters. The audiences in the playhouses were not very large. Life was in the streets and shops. In truth the mimic world of the stage seemed a little forlorn as one came to it from the vivid crowds in the daylight. Why do the managers rush with these productions? They are probably not quite clear as to their reasons. Nothing in the theater is quite clear. The life there is intense, wavering, explosive.

It is evident that no one can see fourteen plays in the six evenings of a working week. I dropped the revival of Maeterlinck's "Bluebird." There remains nothing to say of that harmless work today. I dropped two musical shows, the one by Mr. George M. Cohan not without regret; I postponed seeing a play by Mr. Percy MacKaye at the Neighborhood Playhouse. My relations with the works of this immensely earnest writer have always been a source of discomfort to me. I have a deep conviction that I should at least respect them. I do—at a distance. Brought face to face with any of them a blankness comes over me, a vague and fearful astonishment that so much aspiration, knowledge, earnestness, nobility of intention can wrest from words no fire, magic, memorableness.

I turned to humbler things. Not to "Hurricane." It is a play by Mme Olga Petrova, starring Mme Petrova. That she is an emotional actress of striking ability I do not deny. But the plays she writes for herself are not plays; they are like her gowns—quite too terribly stunning. At the very end of this week came Bernard Shaw's "Saint Joan," which shall be fully discussed hereafter. In the meantime the worthiest offerings of these mad days seem to me to be two American comedies: Anne Morrison's "The Wild Westcotts" (Frazee Theater) and Leon Cunningham's "Neighbors" (Forty-eighth Street Theater).

Both of these comedies stop rather than end and are therefore imperfect in point of structure, which is the logic of art. But anyone who remembers the ending of, say, "Le Tartufo" will not, on this account, quarrel very bitterly with either Miss Morrison or Mr. Cunningham. What both authors have done is to turn a keen, serious, searching eye upon the substance of American life and apply to it the high-spirited yet intellectually quite clear and honest criticism which sound comedy requires.

How rare this is only an habitual attendant of our theater can know. American comedy and American farce have hitherto in the great majority of cases avoided the function of comedy



by removing both substance and treatment from the field of experience and nature into one of almost pure artifice. Miss Morrison's quarreling brothers and sisters, half-heartedly bullying father and helpless mother are immensely real, immensely concrete and representative at once, and she has given these people an idiom that falls with unmistakable veracity upon any American ear. She has written a very merry comedy in which especially Mr. Elliot Nugent and Miss Vivian Martin emphasize fine points finely and treat the broader strokes discreetly. She has also offered the attentive spectator the implied background of her comedy. What arouses our laughter and justly arouses it was acrid and painful in life. The house of the Westcotts was really a terrible one. Only, we view it in a mood of gay irony.

This method, which is the method of all good comedy except the intentionally quite artificial or polite, is admirably carried

out by Mr. Cunningham. He really views these bickering small-town neighbors, these chromo-lithograph sentimentalists with the insight and severity of vision with which Sinclair Lewis views the people of Gopher Prairie and Zenith. We laugh with Mr. Cunningham at the Hickses and the Stones and the Rev. Mr. Tulliver. And in that community in laughter there is a community of vision, criticism, aim, and ideal which made the admirable Equity production of "Neighbors" one of the most agreeable as well as one of the most intelligent experiences of the entire season. Mr. Cunningham, in addition, having now added the authorship of "Neighbors" to that of "Hospitality" may be considered as an important member of that very small group of playwrights who are fighting for a genuinely native American drama against many and heavy odds.

LUDWIG LEWISOHN

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# International Relations Section

## Arizona Backs Obregon

THE reverberations of civil war and revolutionary uprisings in Mexico are almost always felt across the border, but too often they have taken the form of support to the forces of reaction. An instance of this has been the long incarceration in Texas of five Mexican revolutionaries mentioned in another column of this issue. It is interesting, therefore, to see that Governor Hunt, of Arizona, in the proclamation printed below, calls for an end to the traffic in arms across the border and at the same time announces his support of President Obregon and the progressive group now in control of the destinies of Mexico.

### A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, The Republic of Mexico for nearly ten years was torn with civil strife, thousands of her citizens were killed, countless persons wounded, the women of the country suffered untold hardships, many thousands of children grew to maturity without an opportunity to obtain an education; and

WHEREAS, During the past few years, under the administration of President Obregon, Mexico has been on a peaceful basis, her Government has been recognized by the nations of the world, her business has revived, the country has begun to prosper and her citizens are enjoying the fruits of peace; and

WHEREAS, A candidate for the presidency of Mexico has again undertaken to resort to civil warfare in an effort to overthrow the present Government; and

WHEREAS, The people of Arizona, while maintaining a strict neutrality in the affairs of the Mexican Government, yet sympathize with the efforts of the Government to maintain peace in order that her people may live in safety; and

WHEREAS, There is reason to believe that arms, ammunition, and munitions of war are being purchased in Arizona for use in Mexico; and

WHEREAS, While our people have the legal and moral right to carry on commerce with whoever solicits it, yet under the existing circumstances I believe that the people of Arizona can best serve the people of Mexico, the people of the world, and the interests of our own State by refusing to traffic in munitions of war;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. P. HUNT, Governor of Arizona, do urgently recommend that the business men and merchants of the State of Arizona decline to accept and fill orders for munitions of war and that they in particular decline to sell such munitions of war to aliens.

And I do further call upon the sheriffs of the various counties and the peace officers throughout the cities and towns of this State to rigorously enforce all existing laws with respect to the possession of arms and ammunition.

And I do further call upon the peace officers of Arizona to particularly observe the movements of the aliens throughout the State of Arizona, and that if they find any aliens who have entered the State of Arizona except in accordance with the immigration laws of the United States, they be immediately arrested and detained for investigation by the authorities of the United States immigration service.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Arizona to be affixed.

Done at Phoenix, the capital, this 13th day of December, A.D., 1923.

(Great Seal)

Attest:

JAMES H. KERBY,

Secretary of State

GEORGE W. P. HUNT,  
Governor of Arizona

## France Dips into Polish Oil

AT the end of October the Paris *Temps* brought a special article on oil, announcing that a national oil office was about to be set up in Paris. That new department was to be "the pivot of our national oil policy." It was to keep watch over French interests and the chance of developing them in the various oil-producing countries, Poland and Rumania figuring prominently in the list.

About the same time the *Kurier Polski* published the text of an oil convention that had just been signed by France and Poland. The document, which we reproduce below, is unique of its kind. It is doubtful whether such a hard bargain has ever been driven between two independent states at peace with one another. It could only be compared to the abortive oil convention which Germany imposed upon Rumania, broken and helpless, together with the peace of Bucharest, in the spring of 1918.

The present arrangement speaks for itself. One need only point out some of the obvious developments to which it opens the way: (1) The privileges accorded to French capital will make it master of the Polish oil industry. No other foreign capital could compete with it, and Polish capital is non-existent. French capital already controls not much less than half of the Polish oil holdings, but it is clear that Polish concerns in which French capital is in a minority will hasten to allow it a major interest, in order to be brought under the gold-lined wings of the present convention. (2) Russian, Rumanian, etc., oil concerns will have to bear all the taxes in force in their respective countries; they will have to suffer restrictions on export, and they will have to sell internally at a controlled price, which as often as not means a net loss; they will have to suffer the official control of their rolling stock, which is almost general in Central and Eastern Europe; and almost everywhere they already have to pay their export duties in gold values. For all these reasons, and other things being equal, they will hardly be able to compete with the French-owned Polish oil in the markets of Europe. Unless demand is ample, they may as a consequence have to swallow some arrangement dictated from Paris. (3) As it depends on the good pleasure of the French Government whether this or that French oil concern will be included in the list of those benefiting by the convention, all the French oil holdings have practically been brought under official control. It is not unfair to say further that this gives the French Government practical control of the Polish oil industry. (4) By the various financial provisions of the convention the Polish Government has surrendered a very considerable direct source of revenue. It has also surrendered its main card for bargaining with the much-needed foreign capital and for securing it under the better terms of fair competition. It has also surrendered sovereign fiscal rights, as well as sovereign administrative rights. The Polish oil industry has become a state in the state—a French state in the Polish state. That will be so, says Article 9, as long as Poland needs the French alliance.

One more word concerning Rumania. Not long ago a member of the French Senate, M. Bérenger, undertook a semi-official journey through the countries of Southeastern Europe. His mission, it was stated, was to find out whether



those countries deserved by the general security which they could offer the financial help which France was anxious to give them. It is now reported from Bucharest that he submitted to the Rumanian Government "the draft of an oil convention, containing probably preferential rights for French capital in the sense of the convention concluded by France with Poland" (Bucharest *Argus*). But the Rumanian authorities would not entertain such an arrangement. Nevertheless, a different sort of agreement has been negotiated and is about to be signed in Paris. A French combine, led by the French Government, is to advance to the Rumanian Government five hundred million francs, effective, while in return the Rumanian Government will abandon to the said combine for a number of ten or more years, according to the price, all the quantities of petrol and oil which it is entitled to receive from various Rumanian concerns. It is said that in the last two years the Rumanian Government has taken over only small quantities of such quotas due to it, and that in consequence it can dispose straightway over some 4,000 wagons.

Read in the light of the convention with Poland this arrangement discloses what a power French capital is about to become in the European oil market. As the French Government is taking an active share in these developments, their object can hardly be solely commercial. Is there any connection between them and the stand made by France at the Washington Conference for a large fleet of submarines? The text of the convention concluded by Poland with France as published in the *Kurier Polski* concerning the status of those Polish oil companies which work altogether or in the main with French capital is as follows:

ARTICLE 1. The provisions of this convention concern those companies and undertakings which have been recognized, by common agreement, by the Polish and French governments. The French Government will supply the Polish Government with a list of those French companies and undertakings which are also to enjoy the benefits of this agreement. Subsequent changes in that list shall not be made without a preliminary understanding between the two governments.

ART. 2. The companies and undertakings covered by this convention shall be free to export oil and oil derivatives. The Polish Government, however, reserves to itself the right to fix the quantities of oil and oil derivatives needed for internal consumption each year. In such a case eventual restrictions will apply equally to all companies and undertakings. Should the Polish Government find it necessary to fix maximal prices for the oil and oil derivatives destined to be consumed in the country, then the prices shall be fixed in such a manner as to secure as far as possible normal profits to oil producers and refiners. The quantities reserved for internal needs and not claimed shall be declared free for export.

ART. 3. Export taxes on oil and derivatives shall not exceed 40 per cent of the difference between the export price, loco Prohobycz, and the home price calculated on the average of the last three months. Export duties on oil and derivatives must in no case become an obstacle to the free development of the industry in Poland. Similarly no duties may be imposed which would limit normal profits. Export duties are payable in Polish currency.

ART. 4. Within three months from ratification of this convention the Polish Government will return to the companies and undertakings covered by this convention all the rolling stock belonging to them. The rolling stock brought by the companies, or built by them in Poland, will remain at their disposal. All that rolling stock may be employed by the companies at home or abroad. Arrangements concerning freights will be settled in a special convention.

ART. 5. The companies and undertakings covered by this convention will be free to carry out transactions in foreign currencies for the payment of dividends (shares, bonds, participations) and the legal writing off of capital, as well as for the payment of goods purchased abroad. They will not be required to make deposits in foreign exchanges for sales made abroad.

ART. 6. The companies and undertakings covered by this convention will enjoy with regard to taxes, duties, and subscriptions to eventual forced loans the same privileges as other branches of the great Polish industries; which does not exclude the right of the Polish Government to accord subventions or reductions to certain industries which cannot be run profitably. In order to attract French capital to cooperate in the Polish oil industry, and in view of the advantages accorded by the French Government to Poland in various conventions, the Polish Government will exempt in future the companies and undertakings covered by this convention from levies on capital or from eventual forced loans, to which reference was made in the first paragraph of this article.

ART. 7. The Polish Government will favor the construction and the usage of pipe lines for oil or petrol when this should be required by the companies and undertakings covered by this convention. The conditions of such concessions shall be determined by common agreement with the respective Polish department of state.

ART. 8. Should the Polish Government set up an oil council, the companies and undertakings covered by this convention shall be invited to participate in that council in proportion to their importance.

ART. 9. This convention will remain in force until the expiration of the Franco-Polish political convention of February 19, 1921. But this convention shall be revised every ten years, in order to take account of changed conditions in the oil industry. After the ratification of this convention the instruments of ratification shall be exchanged as soon as possible at Paris.

## The Task Facing the Friends

IN our issue of December 12 we published a report of the reconstruction work of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee in Russia. In order to present a picture of the different agencies of relief in that region we asked the American Friends Service Committee for a summary of their activities. The carefully drawn reply, printed below, gives a survey of their past work not only in Russia but elsewhere in Europe, and a description of the task of emergency relief facing the organization in Germany. The desperate conditions in that country make the statement of utmost immediate interest to everyone.

When the war came in 1914 it presented a challenge and a call to all true Friends—a challenge to keep their hearts free from the forces of hate which surged around them and a call to combat those forces of hate with a force more powerful still—the force of love. The American Friends Service Committee embodies the joint answer of Quakers in this country to that call. It was natural that the first work of the committee should be in France; for of all the countries where it was possible to go during the war years, the need there probably was greatest. At one time there were as many as 363 American workers in France.

With the armistice came the possibility of going into other countries—where the need had become greater than it was in France. Two of the first countries entered were Poland and Austria. There are still missions in these countries, but the character of the work has changed. It is no longer relief, but reconstruction work which is being done. The American Friends Service Committee is trying to help these people to solve some of the problems which the war and peace have left and with

which they are too poor to cope unaided. In Poland it is helping those refugees who have no horses and are still living in wet dugouts to haul timber for their new homes. It is also starting a model orphanage and training school for the superintendents of children's homes; for one of the biggest problems in Poland today is that presented by the 300,000 orphan waifs. The biggest work in Austria is the starting of a three years' educational campaign against tuberculosis. This disease has spread rapidly among the weakened population.

In Russia, English and American Quakers fed as many as 403,500 people at one time in the famine year. The workers realized, as every one who considered the situation thoughtfully realized, that the need in Russia would not cease with the famine itself. It was evident that the Russian people—impoverished by wars external and internal and then weakened still further by the famine—would not be able to cope with the problems that famine leaves in its train. The mission has stayed to help them solve these problems.

As in Poland, one of the greatest problems is that of the orphans, this time numbering 5,000,000. The mission is helping the children's homes in its part of the famine area—a district twice the size of Indiana. Another problem is that of the horses, more than 75 per cent of which died or were used for food during the famine. The mission has established a revolving fund of \$25,000 to buy Siberian horses. These horses are sold to the peasants at cost price, about \$24. When they are unable to pay cash they are allowed to pay in services to the community. It has already sold 2,000 horses, but it is estimated that 100,000 are needed in the district.

A third problem is the spread of disease among the terribly weakened population. Dr. Elfie Graff, with the cooperation of the Russian medical authorities, has worked out an extensive medical program which includes the aiding of the best existing institutions which are crippled for lack of funds, the opening of fresh ones, and an extensive educational campaign. But up to the present time all other medical work has been swamped by the fight against malaria, which has affected over 70 per cent of the population and rendered many of the peasants incapable of harvesting their crops. The two clinics which had already been established in Buzuluk and Sorochinskoye have treated over 30,000 patients; and the mission is now working hard opening fresh centers in the remote villages where the sick have been unable to get any treatment at all. The program in Russia this year calls for \$225,000 and will be the second largest task during the winter.

And that brings us naturally to another opportunity—equally great. For the biggest work this winter will be in Germany. Here the American Friends Service Committee is to administer the funds that General Allen's Committee will raise for the child feeding. We hope and believe that this sum will be sufficient to feed at least two million children; for already, according to medical examinations, far more than that number are in want and the need is growing daily. Two cables recently received from Quaker workers in Germany will help to form a picture of conditions:

*"Berlin, November 7, 1923*

*"The past two weeks have brought the actual need to the surface in a way that one perhaps did not think possible. It has driven hundreds and probably thousands into the streets to beg. One sees that they did not come out until the pangs of hunger and the fear in the solitude of their four walls became unbearable. Help to get as much money and food over here as possible and to get whatever is available here as quickly as possible.*

*"GILBERT MACMASTERS,  
("Head of the German Mission)."*

*"ESSEN, December 3, 1923*

*"Immediate dire need. Industrial understanding unattained. Half Rhineland without work. Gelsenkirchen, hundred ninety thousand population only two thousand working. Unemploy-*

## 2000 years ago Jesus taught men how to live

The war, and the events of the post-war period have shown that men do not know how to live. Secret diplomacy, intrigue, lies, selfishness, hate, fear, have almost overthrown civilization and destroyed faith in God and man.

### The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

during and since the war have been proclaiming Jesus' message of forgiveness, love, goodwill and brotherhood to French, Germans, Austrians, Poles, Russians, Serbians and Mexicans. By cash contributions and gifts in kind thousands of other people with similar principles have had a share in giving this message.

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ment increased Essen 280 per cent past month. Prices now above world market. Dole family three children buys one small loaf daily. Known cases starvation middle classes. Rush relief.

ALFRED LOWRY."

All things considered the German situation is worse than any we have faced. A highly organized people have been brought face to face with conditions that a more primitive people might accept with stoicism. Starvation is bringing a sensitized people to the verge of anarchy. If the crash comes, the deaths from starvation will be one of the minor matters. The fury of minds gone mad will be most terrible. Food and friendship can save the situation.

As stated above, the committee has done what it could to help the French people in their time of trouble. Now by this service the peoples of both countries know that it goes—not as a lover of France or of Germany, but as a lover of mankind. For it is not food alone that the people of America need to send to the people of Germany: it is God's message of love. A German minister who had just come from the fatherland in a recent sermon told how all over the country in these dark days the people are crying: "Wo ist Gott?" and the strongest faith is being shaken as millions face slow starvation, disease, and death amid the indifference and even the antipathy of the Christian nations. It was terrible to hear that cry as he voiced it for a despairing people. America can not—it must not—fail them now in the time of their greatest need. It must minister to their physical need; and in the measure in which it does this will it minister also to that greater spiritual need.

It is a wonderful work that we are called to do—the saving of a nation, body and soul. It can be done only if all Americans of good-will get behind the American Committee for Relief of German Children now under the leadership of General Henry T. Allen and support in financially. The need is terrible—a people, stricken down and desperate, call to us to rescue them from physical and moral death. Will we answer that call?

### Contributors to This Issue

MA SOO is the representative in the United States of the Canton Government.

LOUIS FISCHER, who wrote the article on the Russian Communist Party in last week's issue of *The Nation*, is in this country on a short visit. He will return to Russia in a few weeks.

SCOTT NEARING is a lecturer on economic subjects and a member of the teaching staff of the Rand School.

LEWIS BROWNE was rabbi of Temple Israel in Waterbury, Connecticut, until last March. He was forced to resign on account of his support of a public meeting at which Carlo Tresca was prevented by the police from appearing. At present he is engaged in newspaper work.

### *The Nation's Poetry Contest*

closed on January 1. Manuscripts received after that date will not be considered for the prize, which will be announced in the

*Midwinter Book Number*  
*February 13*

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